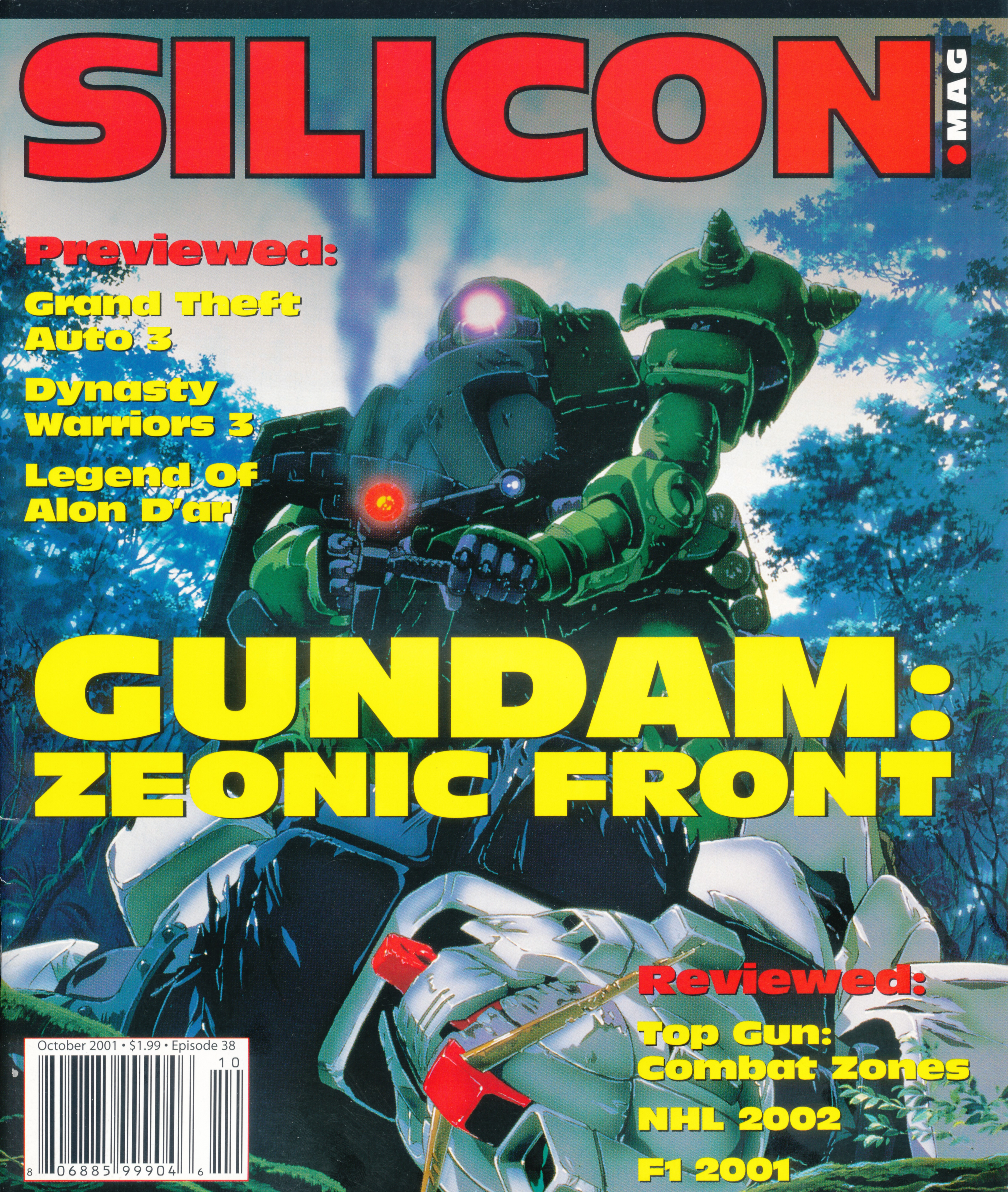
GAMING LIFESTYLE: PLAYSTATION • XBOX • NINTENDO

SILICON.MAG



Previewed:

Grand Theft Auto 3

Dynasty Warriors 3

Legend Of Alon D'ar

GUNDAM: ZEONIC FRONT

Reviewed:

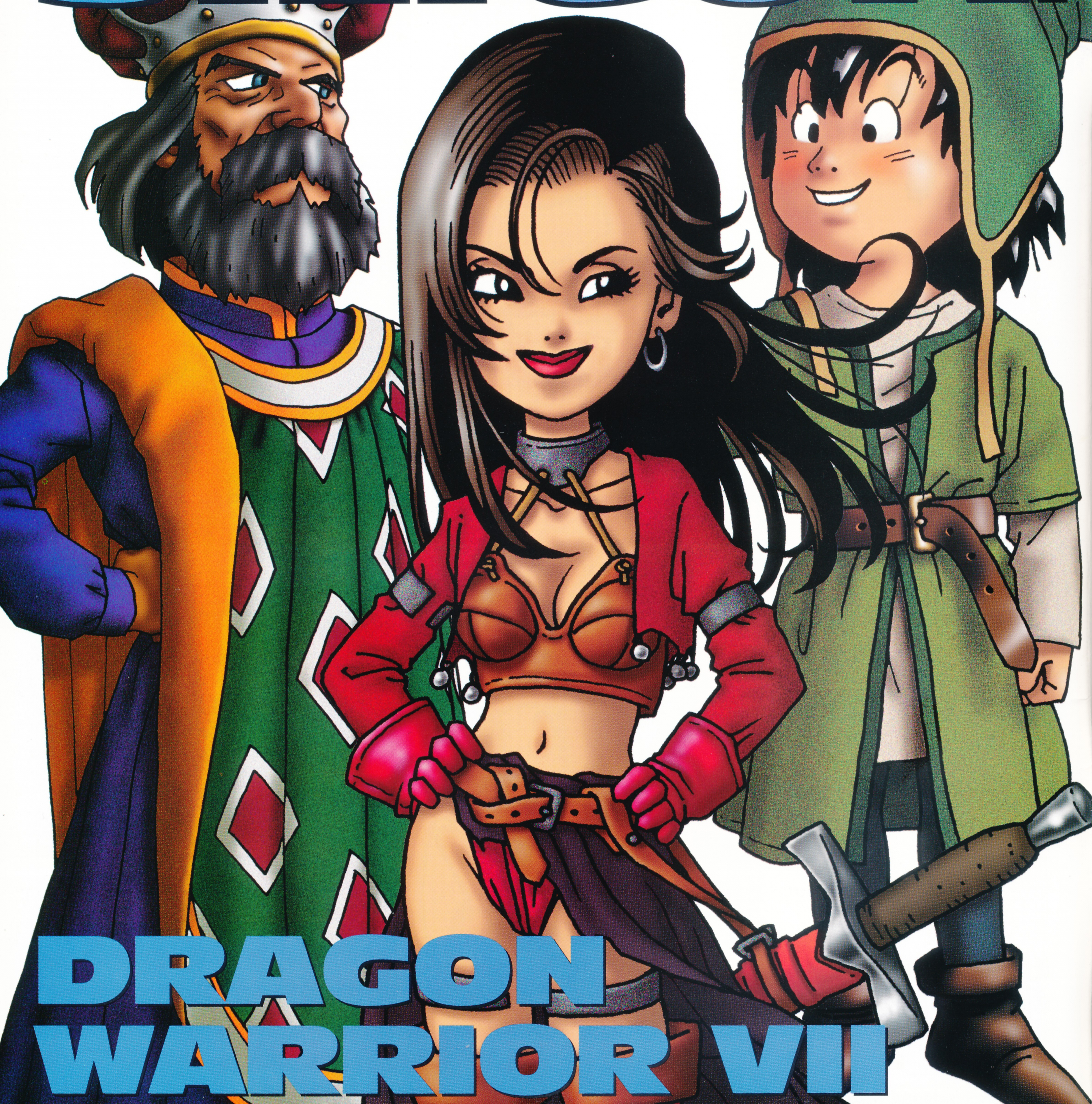
Top Gun: Combat Zones

NHL 2002

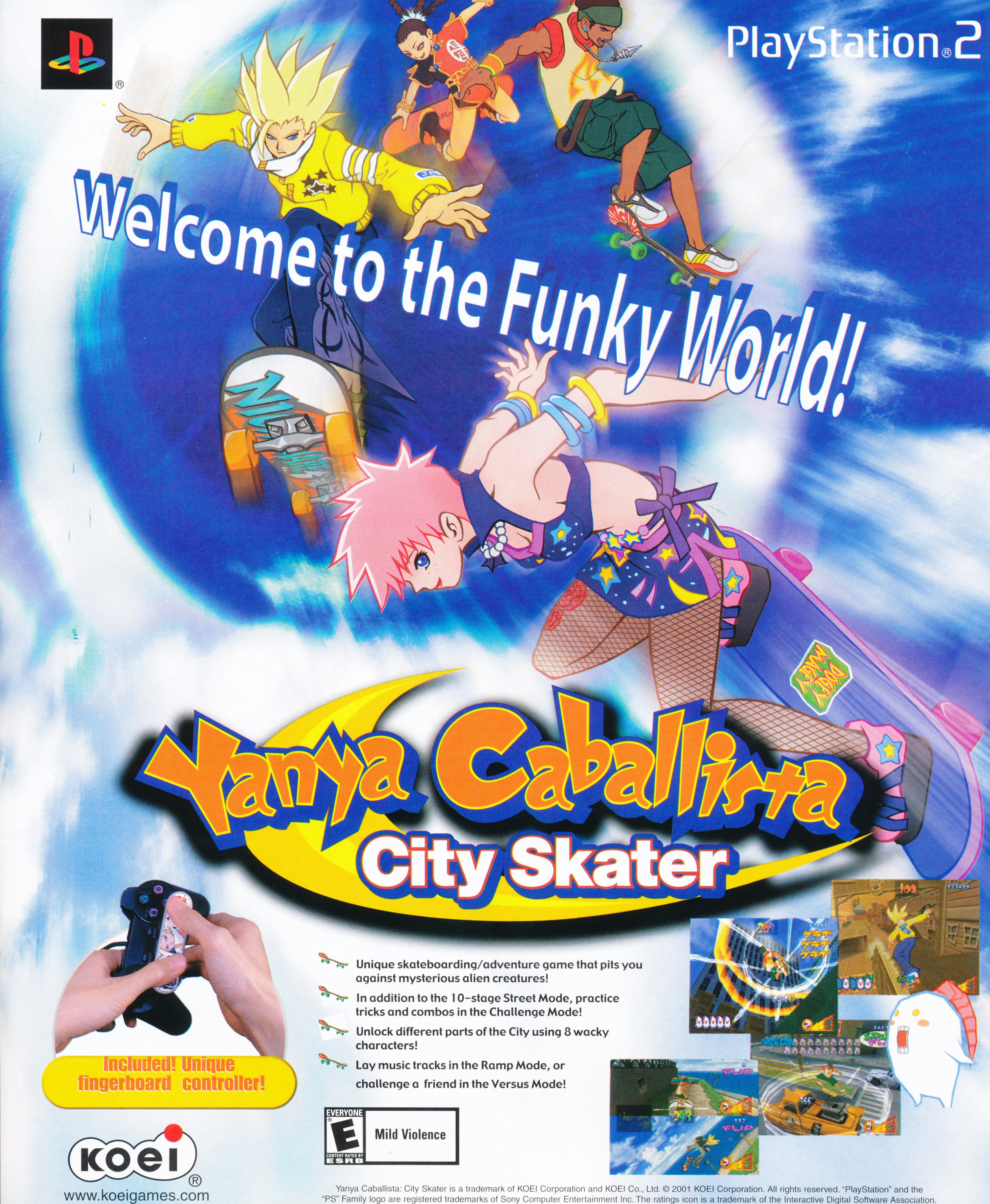
F1 2001

October 2001 • $1.99 • Episode 38

SILICON.MAG



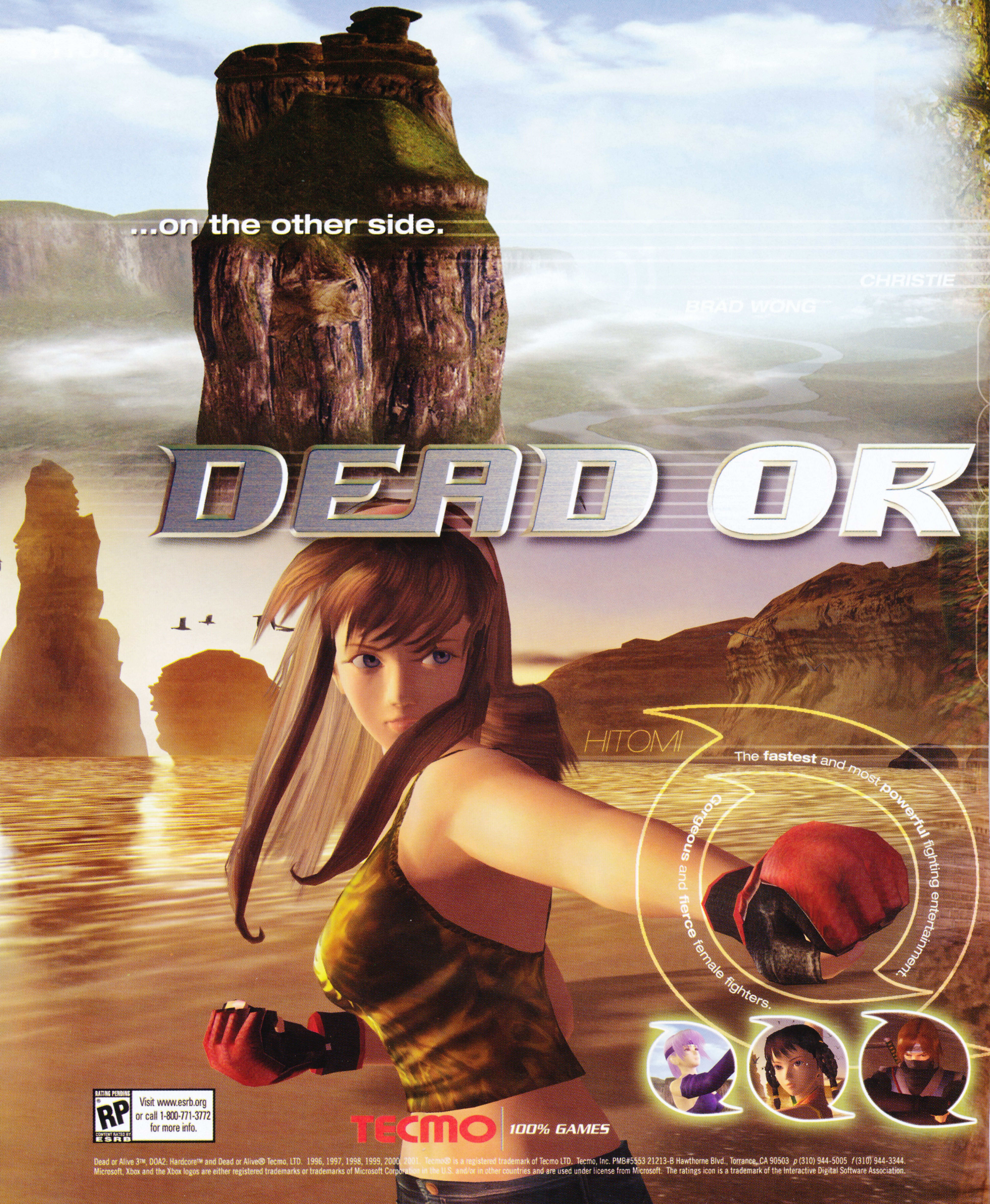
DRAGON WARRIOR VII


PlayStation 2
Welcome to the Funky World!
Yanya Caballista
City Skater
Included! Unique fingerboard controller!
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Violence
koei

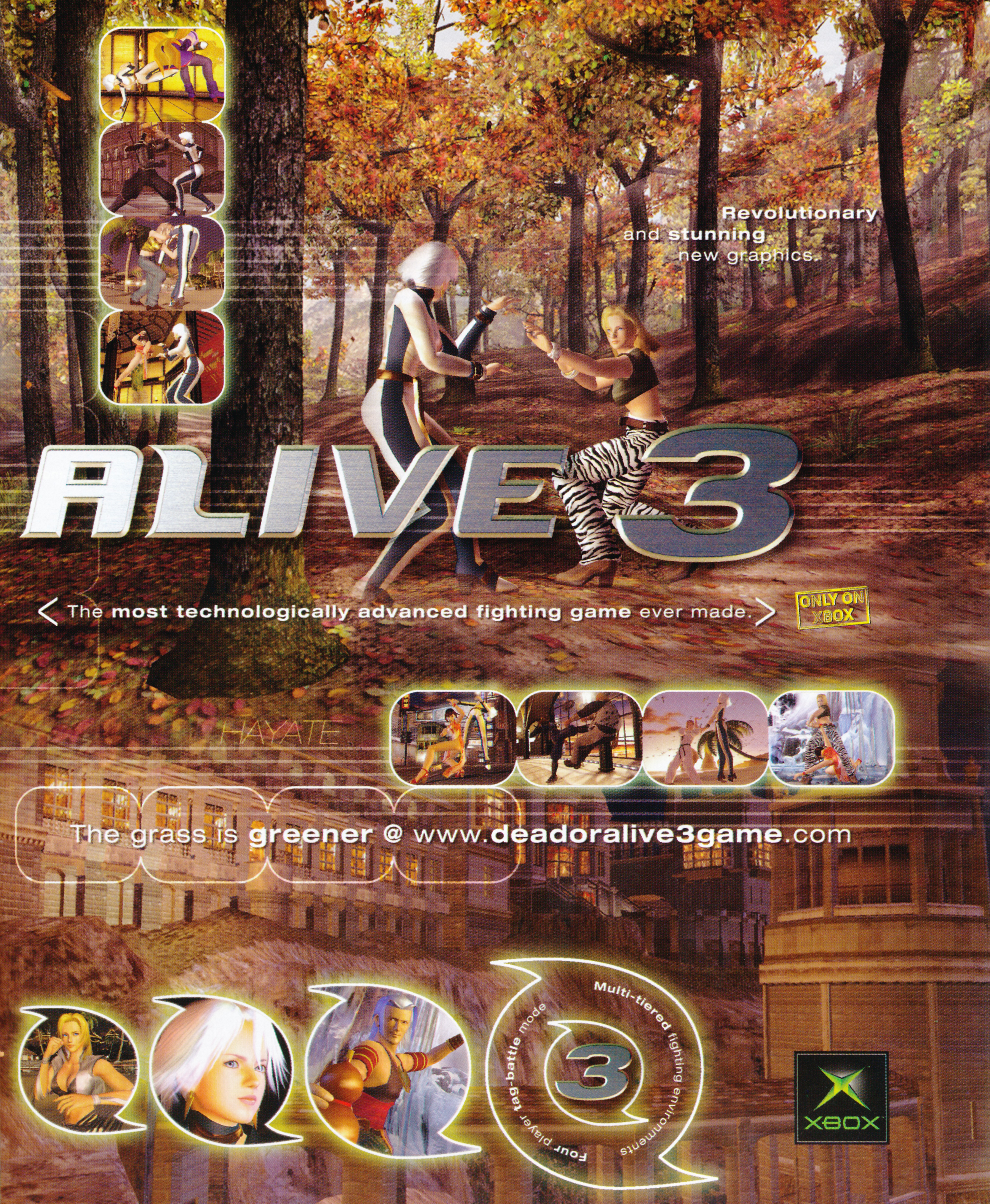
- Unique skateboarding/adventure game that pits you against mysterious alien creatures!
- In addition to the 10-stage Street Mode, practice tricks and combos in the Challenge Mode!
- Unlock different parts of the City using 8 wacky characters!
- Lay music tracks in the Ramp Mode, or challenge a friend in the Versus Mode!

www.koeigames.com

Yanya Caballista: City Skater is a trademark of KOEI Corporation and KOEI Co., Ltd. © 2001 KOEI Corporation. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.


...on the other side.
CHRISTIE
BRAD WONG
DEAD OR
HITOMI
The fastest and most powerful fighting entertainment.
Gorgeous and fierce female fighters.
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.
TECMO
100% GAMES

Dead or Alive 3™, DOA2: Hardcore™ and Dead or Alive® Tecmo, LTD. 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001. Tecmo® is a registered trademark of Tecmo LTD. Tecmo, Inc. PMB#5553 21213-B Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503 p (310) 944-5005 f (310) 944-3344. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.


Revolutionary
and stunning
new graphics.
ALIVE 3
< The most technologically advanced fighting game ever made. >
ONLY ON XBOX
HAYATE
The grass is greener @ www.deadoralive3game.com
Multi-tiered fighting environments
Four player tag-battle mode
3
XBOX

E=SM²

#27 WADE MONNIG
PENALTY SHOT
MONNIG vs WAKEFIELD

WAKEFIELD
31

•This is what happens when you stick two ex-hockey players with blown knees, bad backs and different team allegiances in a small office.

In light of the recent terrorist actions in the U.S., Americans have been looking for a way to make some sense of these spineless atrocities. Many are looking for someone or something to blame.

While videogames have not yet been targeted, the industry has decided to take some steps to make sure that the projects they are working on are not viewed as offensive or unfeeling in the wake of the tragedy. Titles like GTA 3 and Smuggler's Run 2 have been delayed to change certain content. The odd part is that none of these titles have anything to do with terrorism.

In our opinion, the terrorist attacks were strikes against the freedoms we do have: The freedom of speech and freedom to choose what we do and how we do it. In light of that, delaying titles like Syphon Filter 3 does not make sense and cancelling titles like Crime Patrol solves nothing. These titles are statements AGAINST terrorism.

Activision and Konami have decided to remove scenes involving the World Trade Center from Spiderman 2 and Metal Gear Solid 2. While the vision of the towers still makes us wrench, we should take a cue from our ancestors: Just as the phrase "Remember the Alamo" became a rallying cry, so should the phrase "Remember the Towers." We should never let the memory of the World Trade Center die and we shouldn't alter our lives and repress the liberties we have spent decades building.

Makeup

021 • Dynasty Warriors 3

MORALE
164
KO COUNT

028 • Devil May Cry

031 • Ace Combat 4

REPLAY
CAMERA ANGLE
PRESS START BUTTON TO SKIP

Sectors

Accessing • 08
Silicon Mag's spin on the latest news in the video game world with fact and opinion well defined for your viewing pleasure.

Boxes • 08
We pick cool game boxes, and then rant about them. Of course, you don't have to agree with us, and we encourage you to write in either way. This month's Boxes is exciting with three excellent Silent Hill 2 boxes slugging it out.

Cover 1 • 10
Gundam: Zeonic Front puts you into the minds of some of Anime's most famous anti-heroes. Being the bad guys is just too cool.

Cover 2 • 14
Dragon Warrior VII: Four million plus (no joke this is the best selling PSX title ever) Japanese gamers can't be wrong.

Buzz • 18
Read this only if you really want to know what's going on- this section is pretty hardcore.

Prospects • 20
Multiformat previews of the hottest games.

Retrospect • 28
Multiformat reviews of the hottest games.

By Game

Ace Combat 4: Shattered Skies
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance
Capcom Vs. SNK 2
Castlevania Chronicles
Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath of Cortex
Devil May Cry
Dokapon
Dragon Rage
Dragon Warrior VII
Dynasty Warriors 3
Ecks Vs. Sever
F-14 Tomcat
F12001
FIFA 2002
Frequency
Grand Theft Auto 3
Gundam: Zeonic Front
Harvest Moon: Save The Homeland
High Heat 2002 GBA
Jonny Mosely Mad Trix
Kessen II
Le Mans 24 Hours
Legend Of Alon D'ar
Mad Dash Racing
NASCAR Thunder
NBA Shootout 2002
NHL 2002
NHL Hitz
Sega Bass Fishing 2
Silent Hill2
Smuggler's Run 2
Stunt GP
Test Drive Off Road: Wide Open
The Mummy Returns
Top Gun: Combat Zones
WWF: Raw Is War
WWF: Road To Wrestlemania
WWF Smackdown: Just Bring It!

•SM's Rating System

Games are rated from 1 to 99 using units of 1. 50 is the average score. **•SM** scores are based on how well the sun reflects off each disc in bad weather. Just kidding :)

SILICON MAG
38 of 100,000 • 10.01

Contact:
Silicon Mag
P.O. Box 9421
St. Louis, MO 63117

E-mail is preferred. However snail mail is preferred over no mail. Go figure.

Contact:
editorial@siliconmagazine.com

Who Dun It:
Ryan Smith, Publisher
ryan@siliconmagazine.com

Wade Monnig, Editor In Chief
wade@siliconmagazine.com

Brian Wakefield, Senior Editor
brian@siliconmagazine.com

Otherwise Conceived, Written and Performed by:
John Price
Mike Salbato
John Cannon

Silicon Mag (ISSN: 1524-2471) is produced monthly on Pentium toasting Apple Macintosh Computers. EleMental Publishing Inc., Silicon Mag, its logo and contents are ®, ™ and/or ©. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Written submissions used in print may be edited.

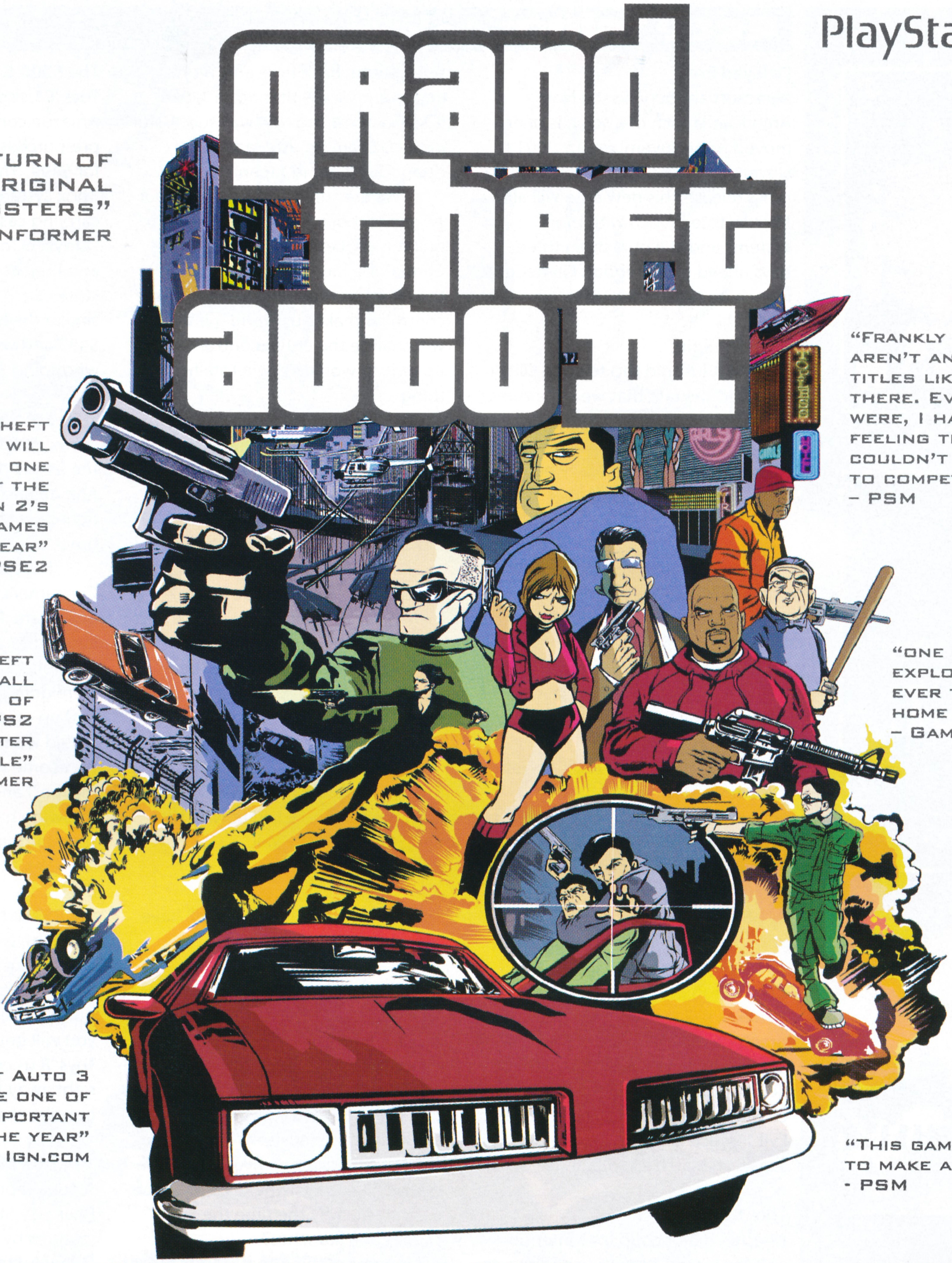
EleMental Publishing uses the following products to produce •SM: Quark Xpress 4.11, Adobe Photoshop 4.01, Adobe Illustrator 8.01, Microsoft Office 98 Gold Edition, Apple Works 6.2, Eudora Pro 4.32, Netfinder 2.2, Internet Explorer 5.0, Mac OS 9.21/8.5.1, Power Macintosh Dual G4/533, Power Macintosh 8600/300, iMac (Indigo), Power Macintosh 8500/120 Sony GDM520R, IBM P92, Viewsonic A70, Iomega USB Zip Drives, Xerox Phaser 750N, Xerox Docuprint N17, Epson Expression 636 flatbed scanner Do we use any Windows PCs? Hell yes- do we like them? HELL NO.

BPA INTERNATIONAL

Silicon Magazine is BPA Audited.

PlayStation®2

GRAND THEFT AUTO III



"RETURN OF THE ORIGINAL GANGSTERS"
- GAME INFORMER

"GRAND THEFT AUTO 3 WILL DEFINITELY BE ONE OF THE PLAYSTATION 2'S MUST HAVE GAMES OF THIS YEAR"
- PSE2

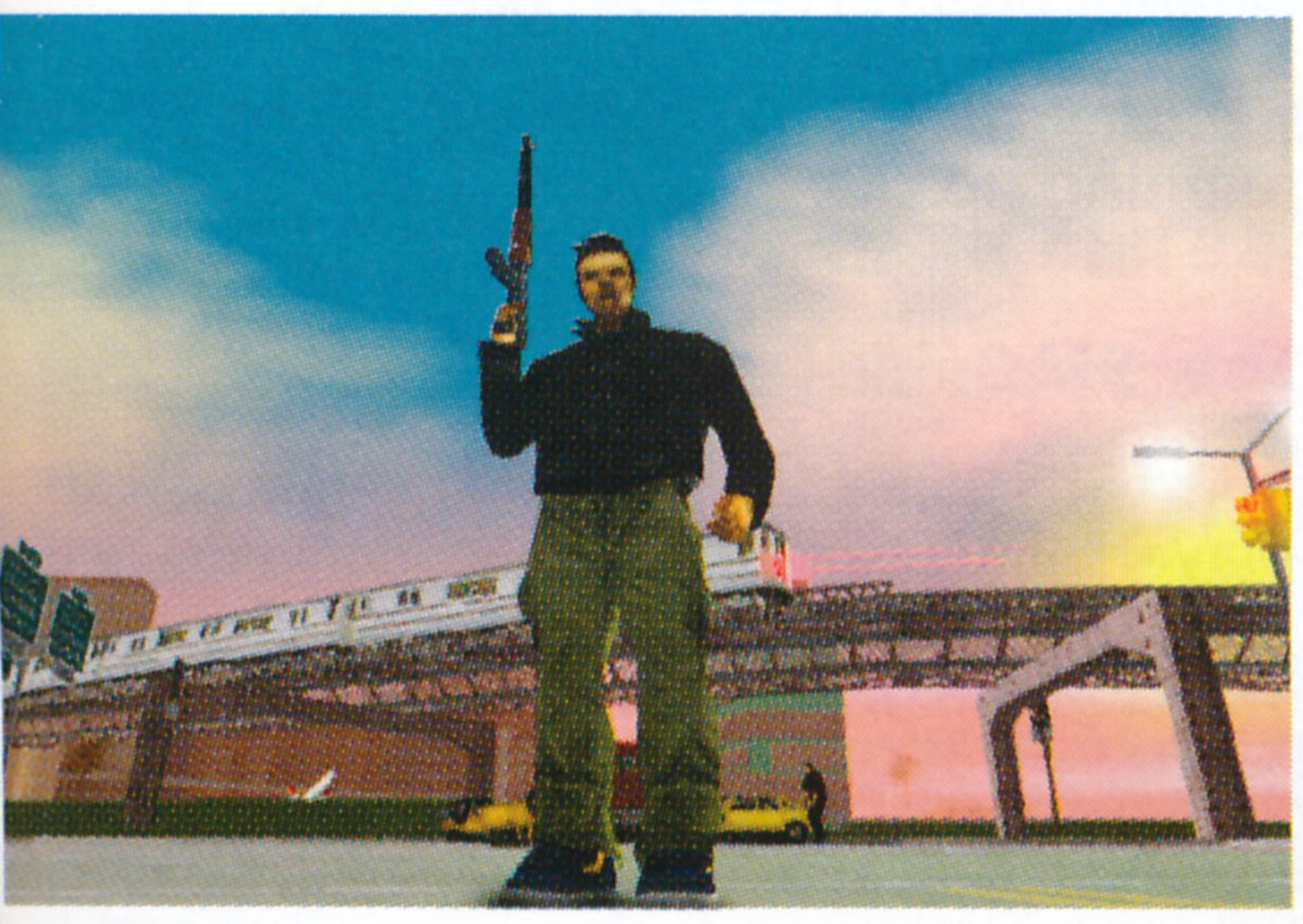
"GRAND THEFT AUTO 3 HAS ALL THE MAKINGS OF A PS2 BLOCKBUSTER TITLE"
- GAME INFORMER

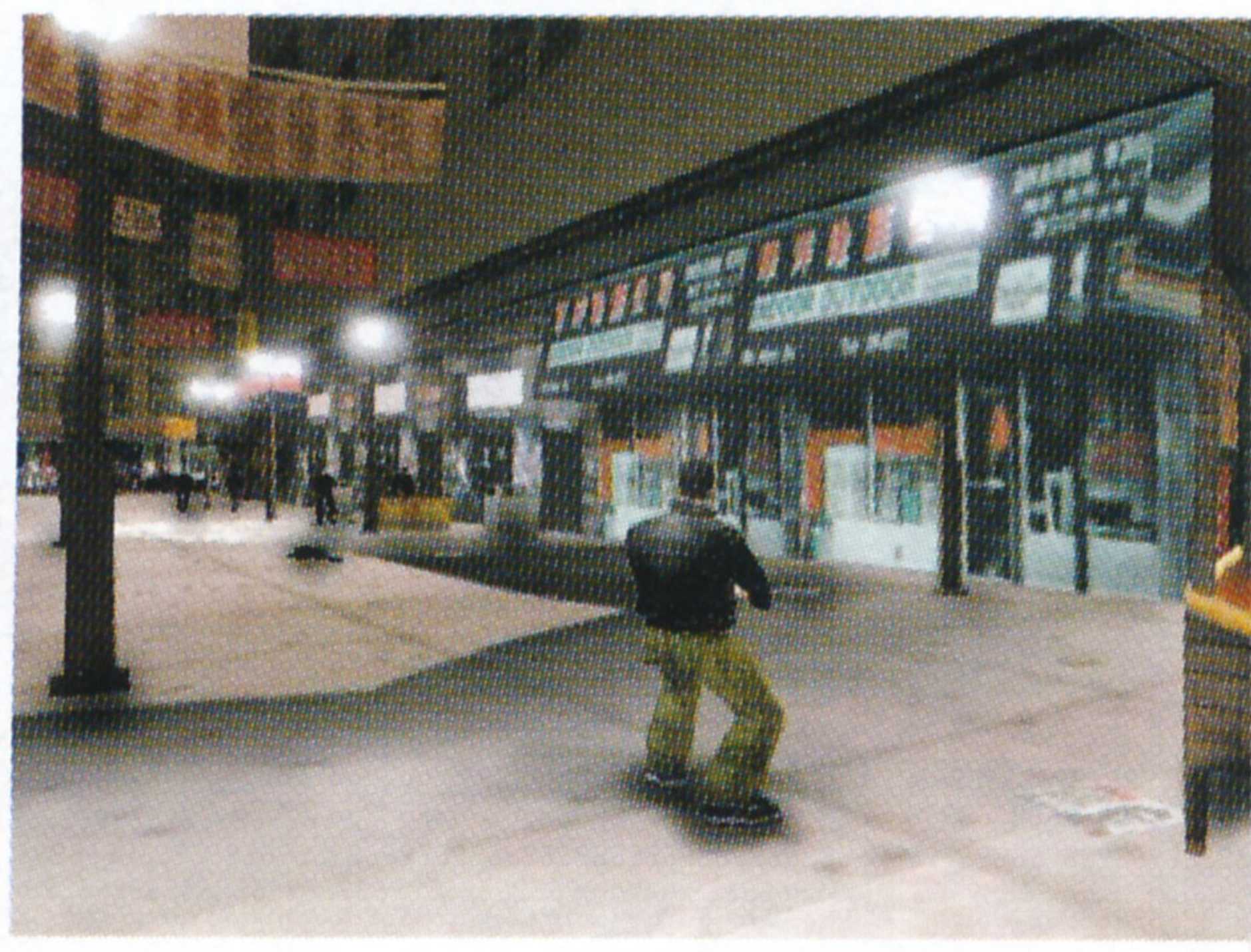
"GRAND THEFT AUTO 3 WILL BECOME ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT GAMES OF THE YEAR"
- IGN.COM

"FRANKLY THERE AREN'T ANY OTHER TITLES LIKE IT OUT THERE. EVEN IF THERE WERE, I HAVE A FEELING THAT THEY COULDN'T EVEN BEGIN TO COMPETE"
- PSM

"ONE OF THE MOST EXPLOSIVE TITLES EVER TO GRACE A HOME CONSOLE"
- GAME INFORMER

"THIS GAME IS GOING TO MAKE AN IMPACT"
- PSM





COMING FALL 2001

WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/GRANDTHEFTAUTO3

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

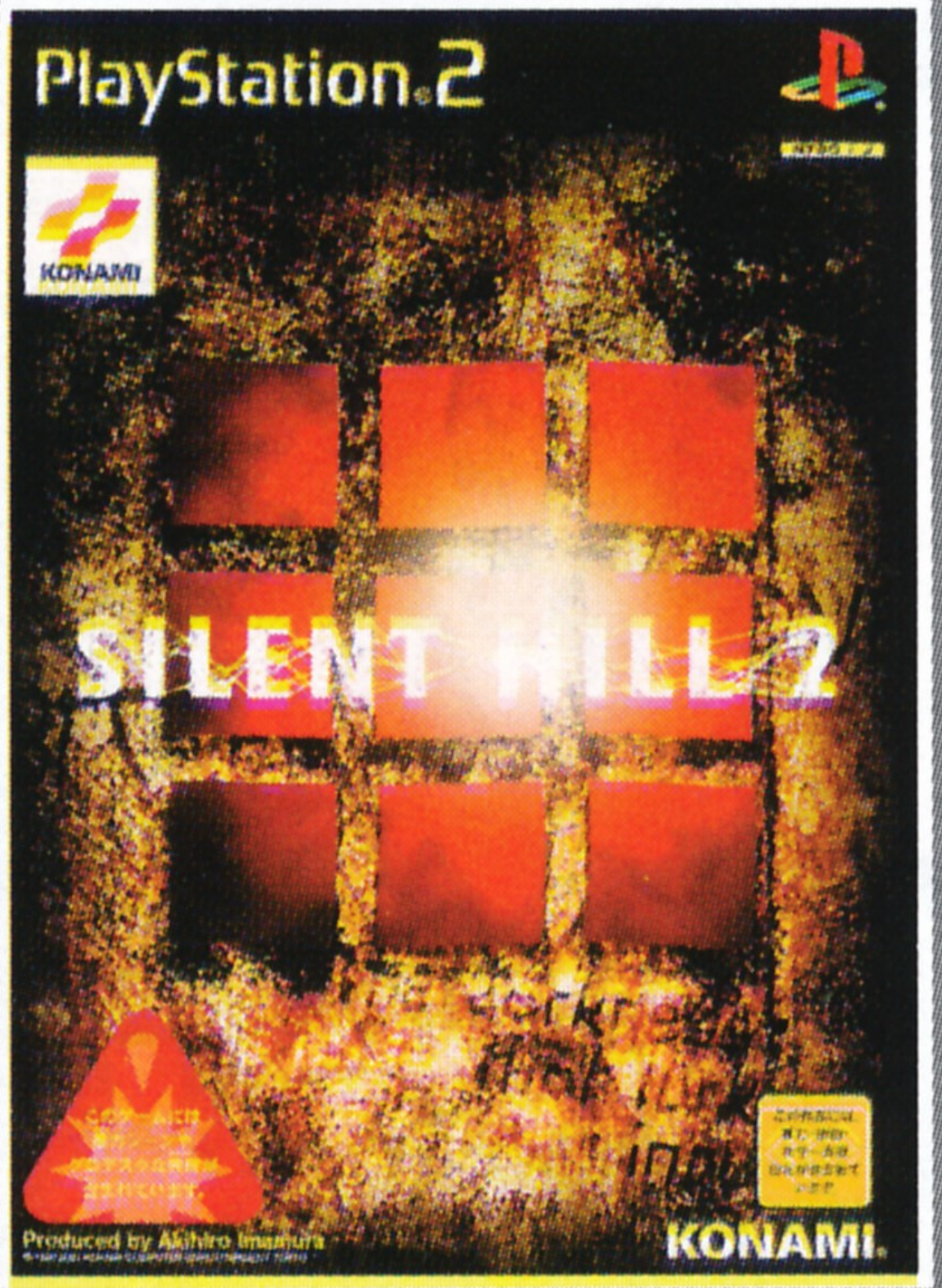
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.

"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. DMA design and the DMA Design logo are trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software Inc. Rockstar Games and the Rockstar Games logo are trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. © 2001. All rights reserved.

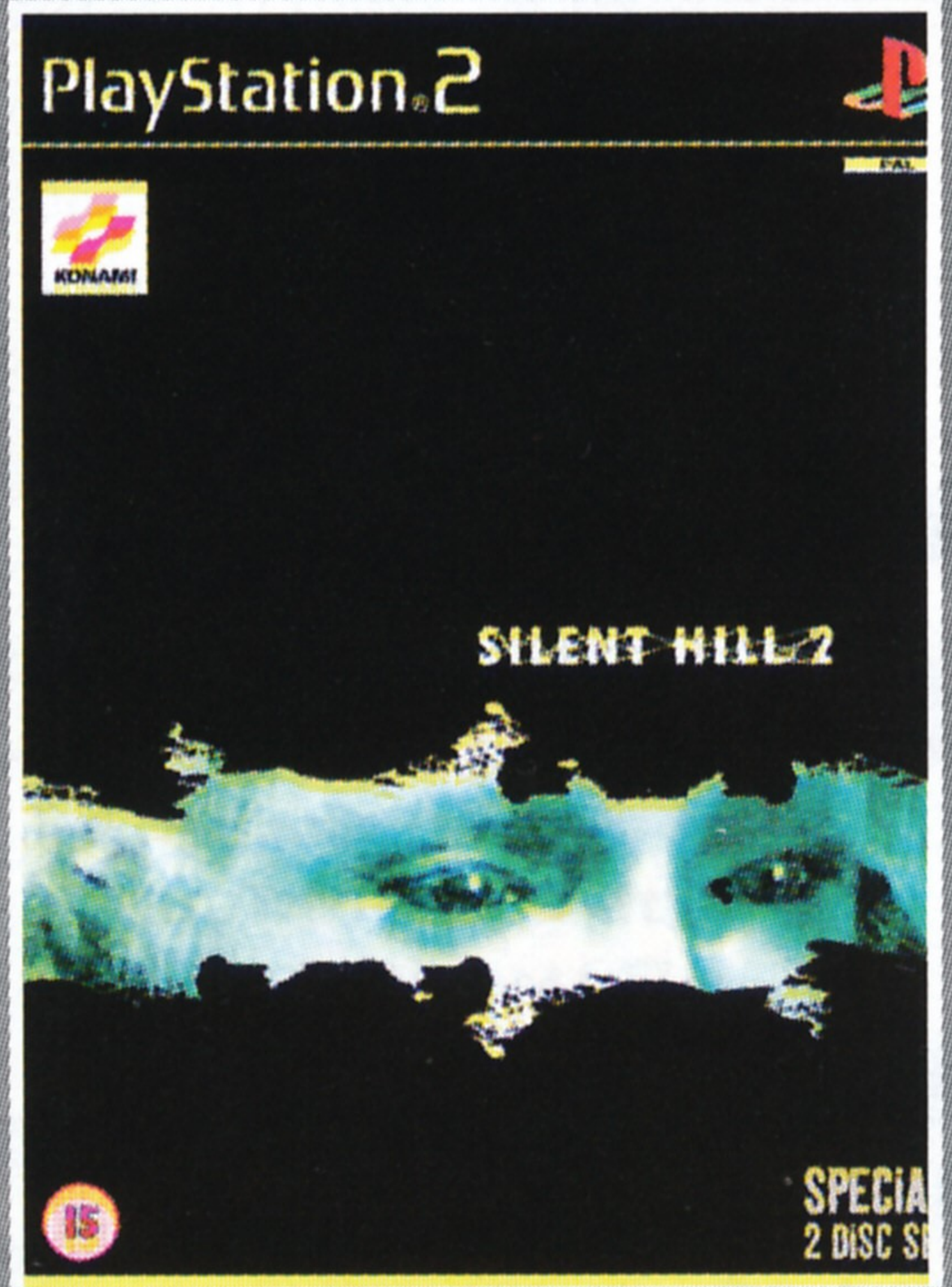
Note: Rockstar will be following IDSA guidelines for M rated games in the marketing of this game. This game contains violent language and behavior and may not be appropriate for persons under the age of 17. It is a comic interpretation of gangster activity and the story, names and incidents portrayed herein are fictitious. No identification or similarity to actual persons, living or dead, or to actual events is intended or should be inferred. Any resemblance is coincidental. The makers and publishers of this videogame do not in any way endorse, condone or encourage this kind of behavior.

DMA
DMA DESIGN LIMITED

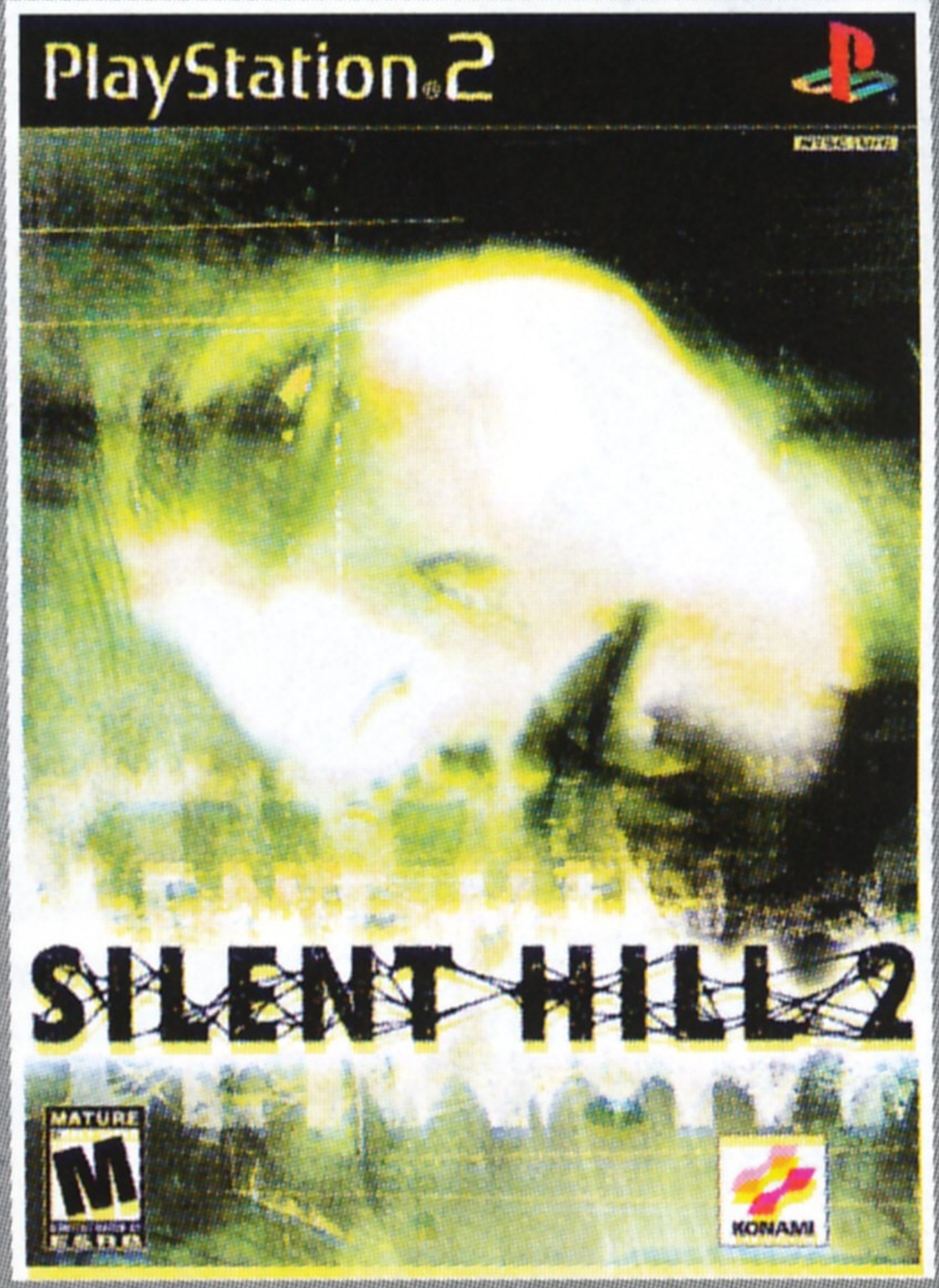
Boxes



Japan



Europe



U.S.

This month's Boxes was fairly easy to sort out. All agreed that the Japanese box was the least interesting, 66% said the U.S. was the best, and 33% the European.

What do you think? Write us: boxes@siliconmagazine.com

Accessing: the news spin

Delayed Box
Microsoft announced the North American launch of Xbox has been moved from November 8th, 2001 to November 15th, 2001. According to a press release, this new date will allow Microsoft to launch with more systems and still puts them three days ahead of Nintendo's GameCube launch on November 18th.

The •SM Spin:
Microsoft just did this to spite Silicon Mag and the fact that we ran a rumor in Accessing for the first time in Episode 37. (The rumor was that the Xbox launch would actually be moved forward to November 1st, which now makes us look doubly silly.)

In all seriousness, this delay still puts the Xbox ahead of the GameCube by a few days, which is what Microsoft's main objective has been since Nintendo announced the GameCube would launch days before the Xbox at E3.

Trying To Shake The Kiddie Label:
Capcom and Nintendo have announced that the Resident Evil series will become GameCube exclusive. Both Resident Evil Zero and Resident Evil 4 have been confirmed as GameCube exclusives. They also announced there will be GameCube remakes of Resident Evil 1, 2, 3 and Code Veronica "Complete." The remakes will feature photo realistic graphics and the prerendered backdrops will be replaced with full 3D environments (this has only been confirmed for the remake of Resident Evil 1 which is due to be released in Japan on March 22, 2002.)

The •SM Spin:
Another major coup for Nintendo and the GameCube. It is good to see that Nintendo is actually following through on its E3 promise of targeting older gamers.

Resident Evil has always been synonymous with the Playstation, even though it has appeared on many different systems. The series will sell systems, both here and, more importantly for Nintendo, in Japan. (Case in point, the N64 was successful in the U.S. but an utter and total disappointment in Japan.)

We are sure Nintendo cut a real sweetheart of a deal with Capcom to pull this off. Let's just hope the GameCube has what it takes to do the RE series right. Just looking at the controller makes us wonder if they will change the entire control set-up...which wouldn't be a totally bad thing.

The GameCube Launch...Delayed But Strong:
Nintendo of America's U.S. GameCube launch this November looks like it will have these titles available in the first few weeks: Luigi's Mansion, Wave Race: Blue Storm, Pikmin, Super Smash Bros. Melee and Eternal Darkness.

Third party releases include: All Star Baseball 2002, Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2, Extreme G3, NFL Quarterback Club 2002, Crazy Taxi, FIFA Soccer 2002, Madden NFL 2002, SSX Tricky, Star Wars: Rogue Squadron II: Rogue Leader, NFL Blitz, NHL Hitz and Super Monkey Ball.

The •SM Spin:
The U.S. launch looks like it will have much more to offer than the Japanese launch. While Japan received Luigi, Wave Race and Super Monkey Ball, it looks like American developers Acclaim, EA, Midway and LucasArts will help to boost the number of quality launch titles...if you don't already own PS2. If you already own a PS2, the must-own titles drop from over a dozen to five or six. How many PS2 owners who want Madden won't have it by the time the GameCube launches?

Another thing that stands out is the much ballyhooed Japanese software support that the GameCube is supposed to benefit from and that the Xbox is supposed to lack is nowhere to be seen at the GameCube launch. Maybe it's a case of good thing to those who wait.

The $500-$1000 Xbox:
Toys 'R us.com has teamed with Amazon.com to allow gamers to pre-purchase an "Xbox Premier Pack" for $499. The bundle includes: The Xbox system and controller, ALS carrying case, Odd World: Munch's Oddysee, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2X and Project Gotham Racing. Other stores, such as Babbage's, are offering similar deals with most starting at $499 and working their way up to a whopping $999!

The •SM Spin:
Wow, $500 for a system! Wasn't that the magic price that killed the 3DO? And at least the 3DO had the definitive Madden at that point in time!

Here is a note to retailers: Consumers DON'T want bundles! We don't care if you get more units allotted to your stores if you sell more controllers and memory cards. If we were going to shell out 500 bucks and up on a new system, at least we would want to pick out the games that come with it (Dead or Alive 3 maybe?) and we wouldn't be throwing hard earned game-spending money on a carrying case!

Yes, the Xbox is not alone in this deal… The GameCube is doing it and the PS2 did it when it launched. We think the whole bundle deal is weak and we are avoiding buying from any store that requires you to buy a bundle in order to be assured that you will get a system. Of course, the Toys 'R us.com bundle deal sold out right away. We wonder how many bundles they were offering?

The True Meaning Of Multi-Platform:
A Sega representative confirmed Phantasy Star Online's cross-platform features by showing Phantasy Star Online running on both the Sega Dreamcast and Nintendo GameCube teaming up.

The •SM Spin:
It still staggers the mind to see players with two different consoles able to interact with each other.

Noticed: catching the details

If you want to see the future of videogames, you don't have to go to E3 or Tokyo Game Show. All you have to do is go to the local movie rental store.

While Final Fantasy: The Spirit Within was a disappointment at the box office (which we contribute to the complex plot and strong Japanese cultural ties), it did succeed in showing the general populace just what is possible when creating with computers and talented animators. Just a few months ago, Square showed portions of FF:TSW being rendered in real time on PS2, as if it were a game. The Spirit Within is a peek at the next evolution of videogames. Make sure you pick up the DVD and take a peek at the future.

Compatible with Game Boy® Advance

Lufia
The Legend Returns

- Twelve playable characters, each with their own unique personality and special attacks!
- Immerse yourself in a compelling story line filled with love, hope, honor, terror and revenge!
- Explore the 200 levels of the Ancient Cave!
- Master various skills and techniques in a new Active Matrix System!

The island of the Sinistrals, Doom Island, sank deep into the sea after the Second Doom Island War. It was believed to be in an eternal sleep, but has once again begun silently beating, preparing to make its appearance in the sky for the third time.

The evil Sinistrals have again been resurrected and released an unforeseen terror on the land. A force has awakened within you...a Spiritual Force that draws you to a conflict that will save the world! The power of Maxim's legendary bloodline lives in you...

The thread of destiny guides you through an adventurous journey looking for an unknown destination!

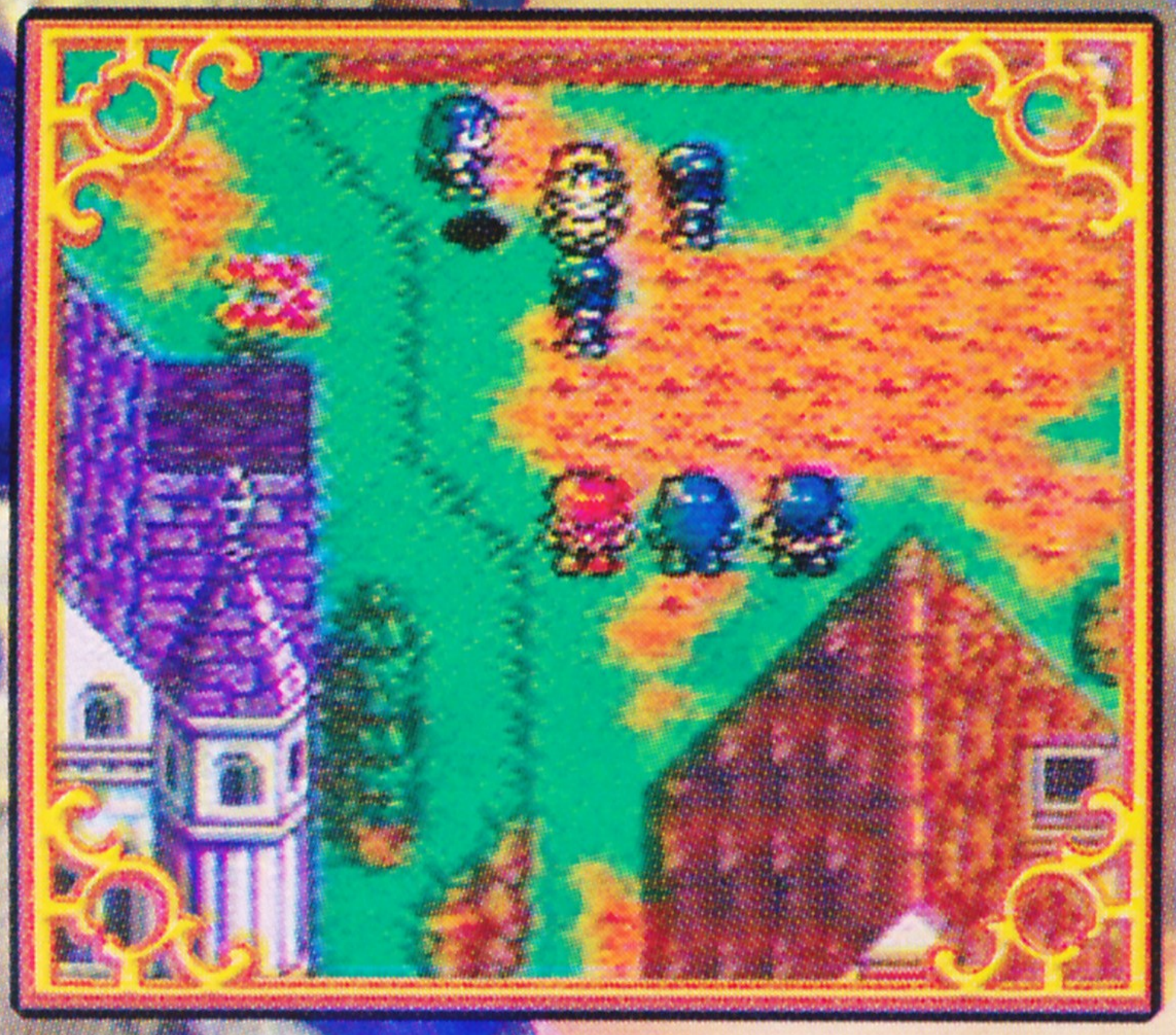
EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

GAME BOY COLOR

Official Nintendo Seal of Quality

Serious Fun™ NATSUME®

Red Wisp
Veed
20
172
92
17



www.natsume.com

Serious Fun is a trademark of Natsume Inc. Natsume is a registered trademark of Natsume Inc. Developed by Neverland Co. Lufia is a registered trademark of Taito Corp. ©2001 Natsume Inc. All rights reserved.

COVER 1:

Take a walk on the Zeonic side

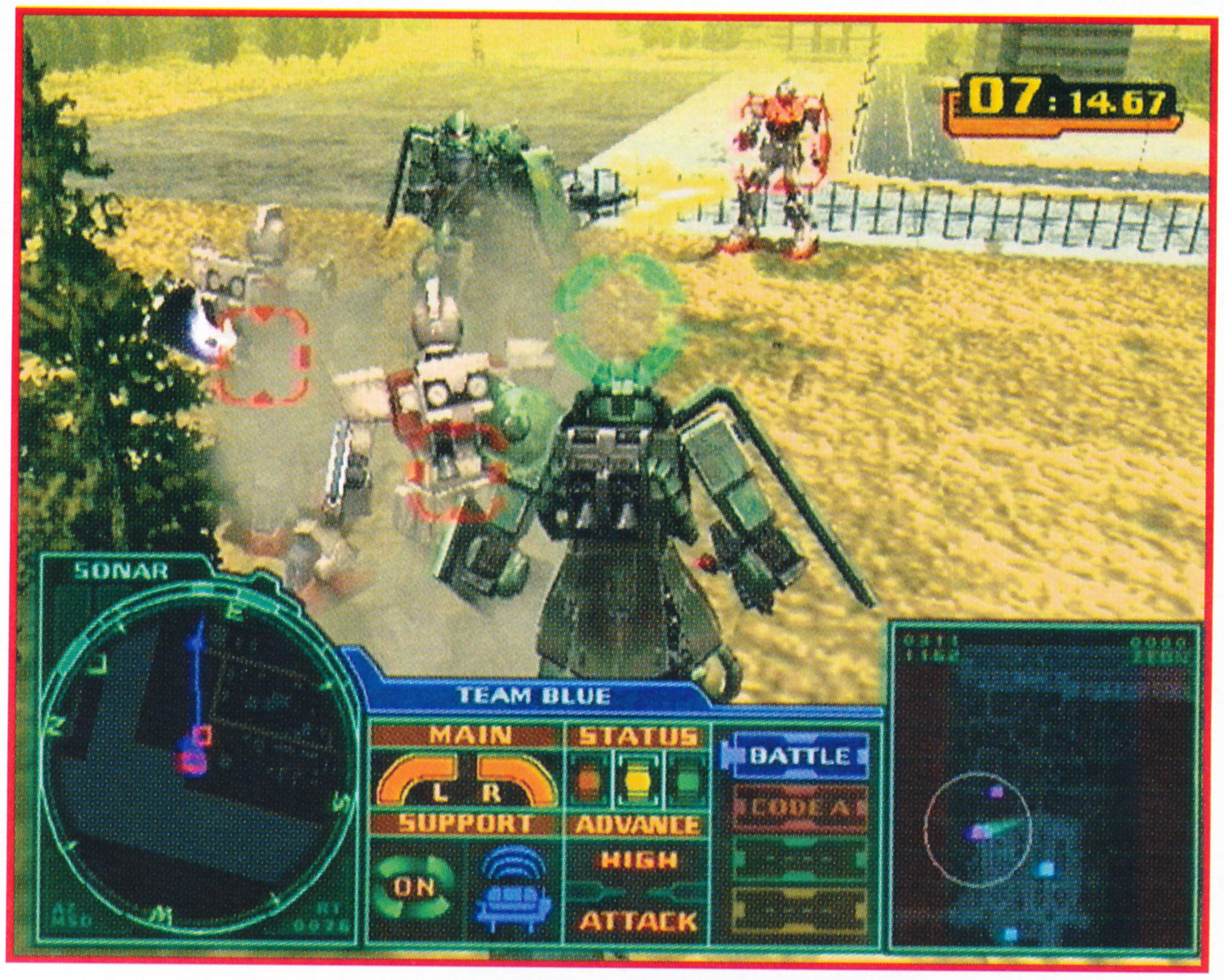
GUNDAM: ZEONIC FRONT

Platform: PS2 • Publisher: Bandai • Release Date: Fall • Stage: 80%

Gundam is a true classic in Japan, much in the way that Star Wars has reached epic status here in the states. Sunrise debuted the original television series Mobile Suit Gundam in 1979 to Japanese audiences. The classic series ran its course and even spun off a number of sidestories, two of which (Gundam Wing and Endless Waltz) finally made an impact on our side of the Pacific. Now, the original Mobile Suit Gundam episodes are being aired stateside for the first time and the American Gundam obsession has led to the U.S. finally getting a taste of the videogame version of the series. By the graces of Bandai, Gundam: Zeonic Front will soon be appearing on Playstation 2. However, in a twist anyone who has ever wanted to fly a TIE fighter in the Imperial Navy can appreciate, Zeonic Front will put players in control of a group of forces spearheading the assault on planet Earth for the Principality of Zeon. Set during the One Year War (in the year 0079), the Zeon fight against the Earth Federation. ZF does not simply settle for putting you in control of a Mobile Suit, it puts you in command of multiple platoons of the Midnight Fenrir Corps branch of the Zeonic Army. While some Gundam fans may not be familiar with Lt. Commander Garret Shmizer, Ensign Niki Roberto, and Lieutenant Lou Roher they soon will be. They the are underlings players will direct to carry out their orders.

ZF is a real-time, squad-based action/shooter. It bears more than a passing resemblance to Front Mission Alternative (featured in Episode 35's Wanted section). However, Zeonic Front offers more interaction than FMA. It allows players to actually take control of the squad leaders of each platoon and engage the enemy instead of simply sitting back and giving orders. Each battle begins with a cool Zeonic slanted mission summary that gives players an idea of the reasons and justification behind the Zeonic cause. Many of the early missions begin with a

• It was a low point in the mission when Mobile Suit Group Beta had to pull over to a gas station and ask for directions



training session that briefs players on the skills and strategy they must learn in order to succeed. With up to three platoons under the players command during each mission, paying proper attention to these instructions and entering the sortie with a well executed plan is a must.

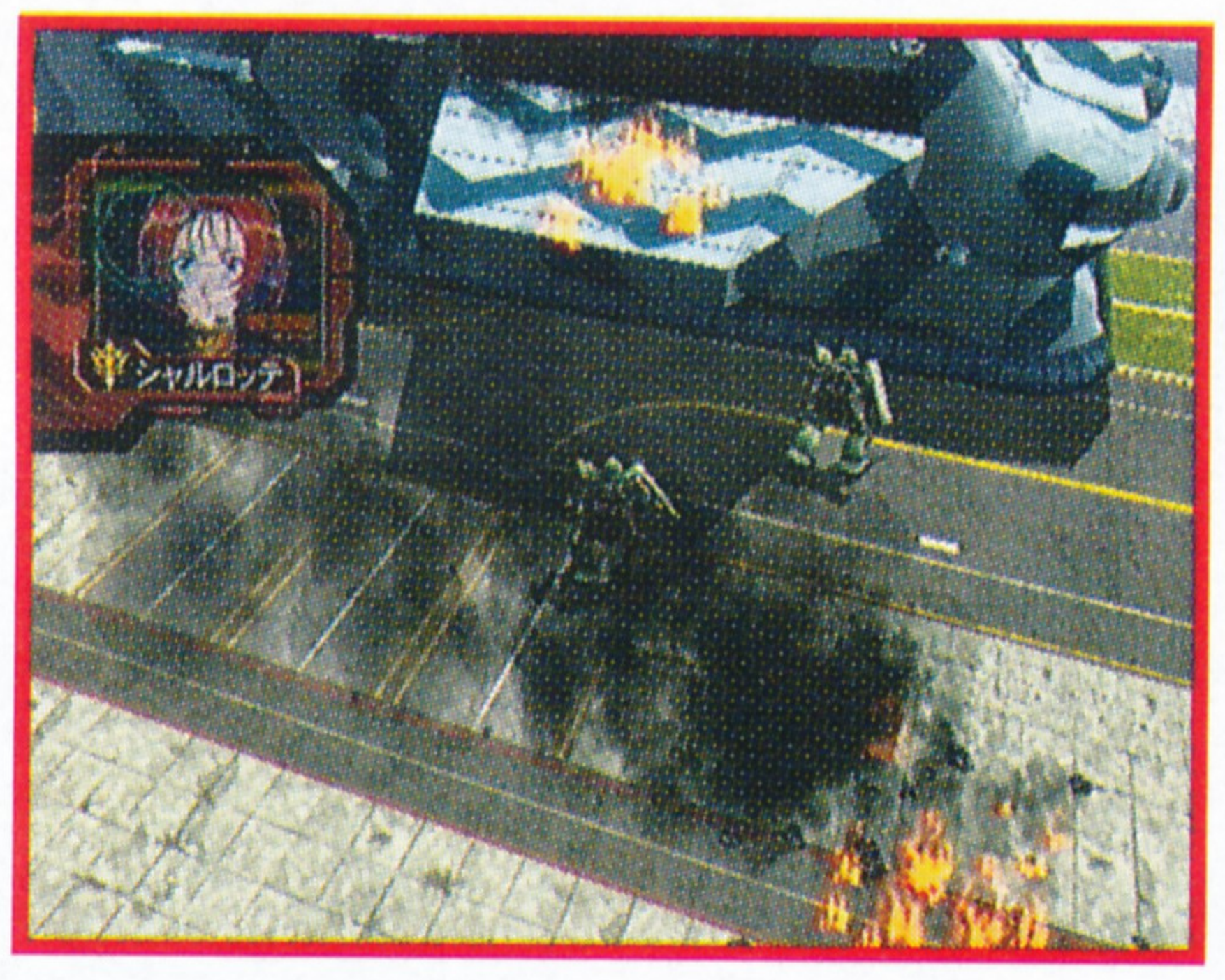
The strategy of ZF is apparent in the mission readying screen. Each team must be set up with the weapons (both main and support), commanders, correct type of sensors, and the most advantageous route to get the proper results. For instance, route set-up can be done quickly and easily using a preset course that has been chosen by the computer, but you can also create your own custom route by setting up waypoints. If you are unsure of what approach to take you can ask the advice of those under your command and they will give you suggestions. Support weapons are also a linchpin to success with grenades both doing damage and blinding enemies with smoke, and various pods disabling a specific type of detection system. Just remember that crippling Radar (that covers a wide range but is ineffective against sheltered objects), Thermal (narrow band detection based upon heat sources), or Sonar Pod (good versus moving objects but bad versus static objects) not only interrupts the ability of the enemy to detect you, but also your ability to detect them.

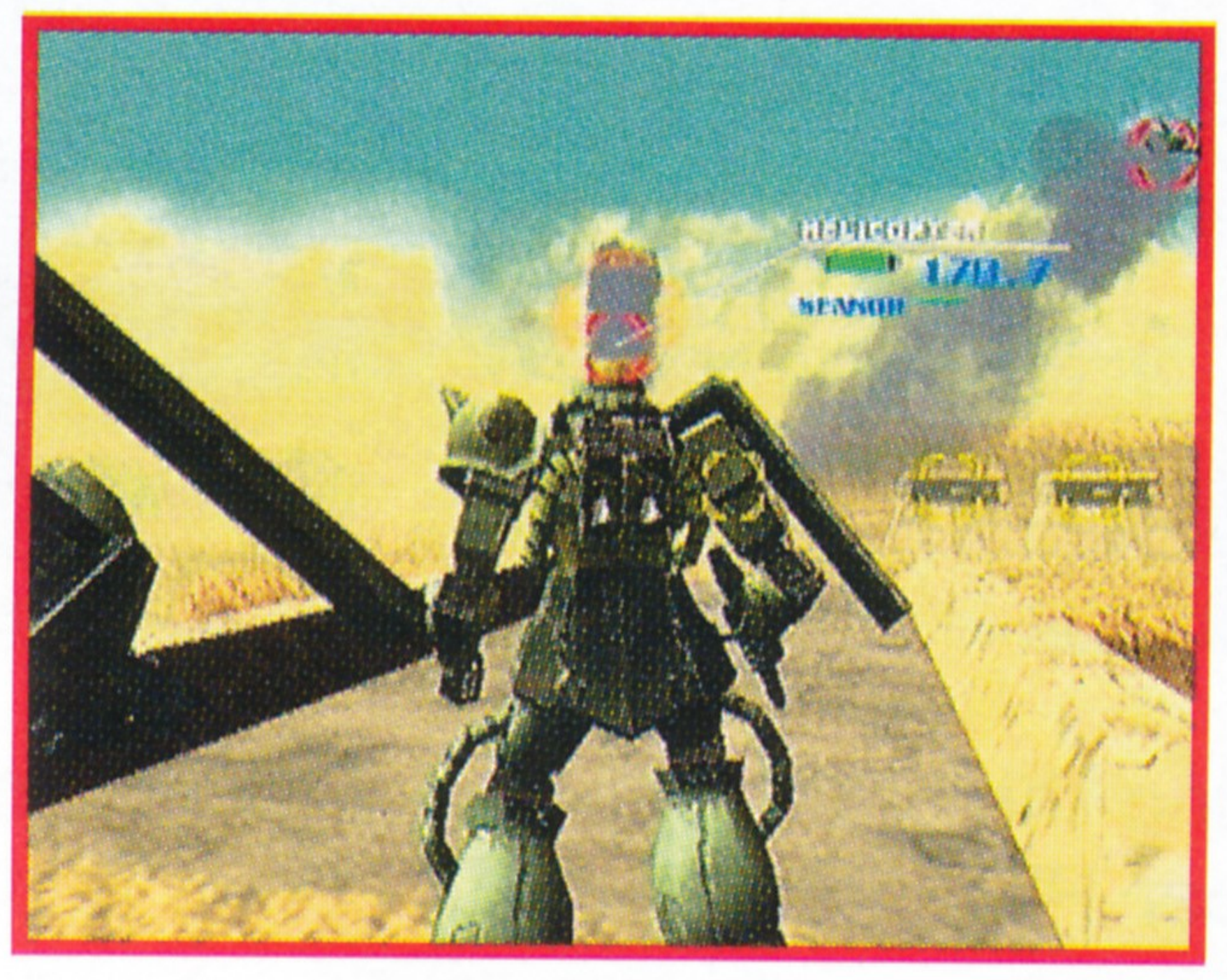
After you have set out the best battle plans, you are given the choice of using a semi-automatic mode that executes the plans for you or taking control of the leader of the different platoons. While in command of a Mobile Suit, the left analog stick moves the MS while the right stick strafes and controls the weapons sight. By using low speed or high speed attacks and avoidance, you attempt to complete your objectives. The R1 executes normal and melee (hand to hand) attacks. This mode also gives full control to the player, so they can easily switch the plan of attack as needed or follow it to a tee. Players are also not bound to one platoon as you can switch between teams by simply pressing up or down on the digital pad to jump into the suit of a different team's commander.

The completion of the mission is always the primary objective and losing a single Mobile Suit does not mean the battle is lost. However, players are scored on the amount of stealth used in the mission, number of objectives that were achieved and penalized for each Mobile Suit lost during the battle. Each successful completion ends with the player being ranked from S (the best) to E (the worst).

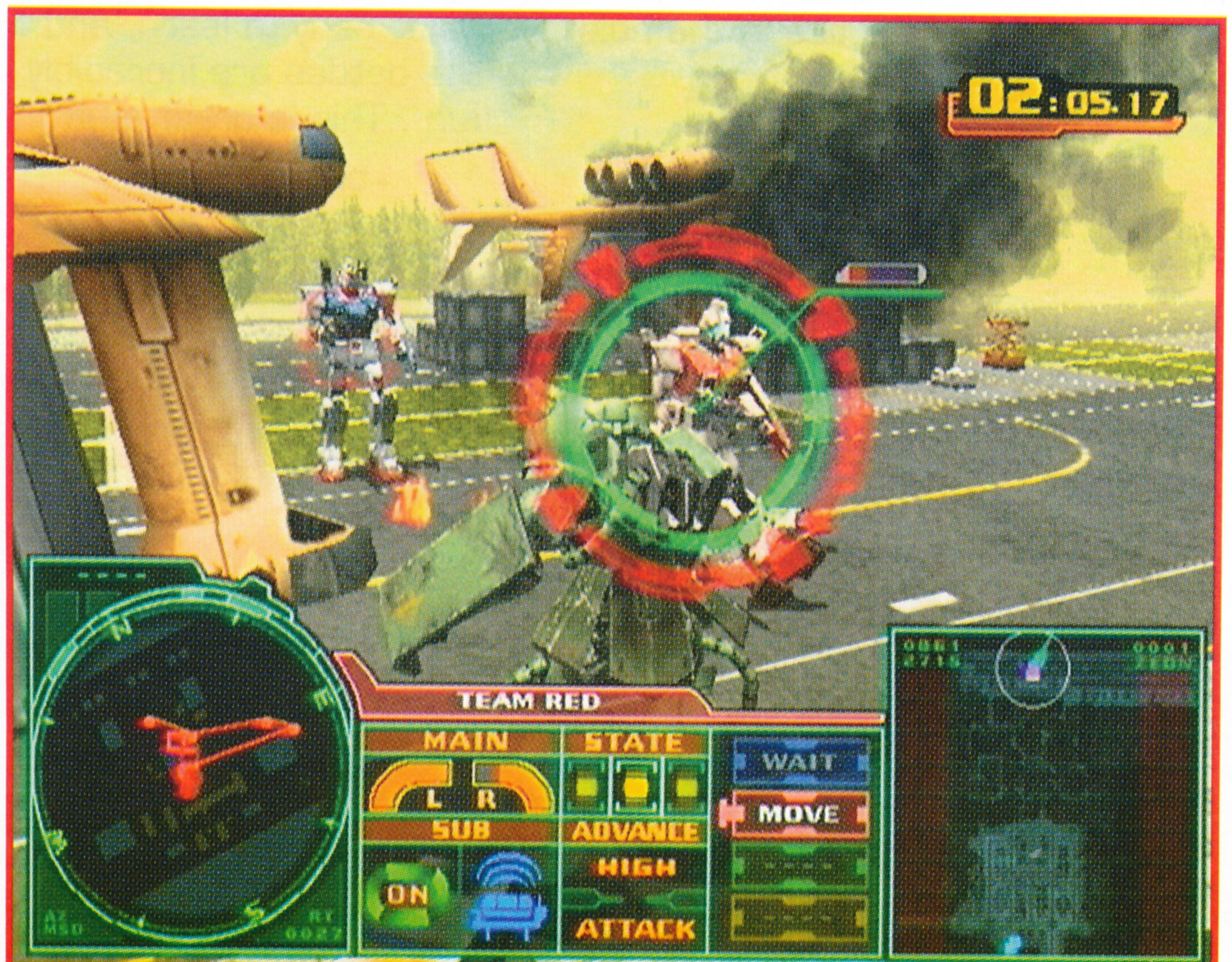
One thing we found especially exciting about Zeonic Front is that actual military strategies work! You can execute pincer movements and decimate an enemy stronghold. Taking a diagonal attack vector and using it to try to get behind an enemy also produces spectacular results. Just remember that the Mobile Suit's movement drops your accuracy with weapons. For best results, remember to snipe, not strafe, and your hits will skyrocket.

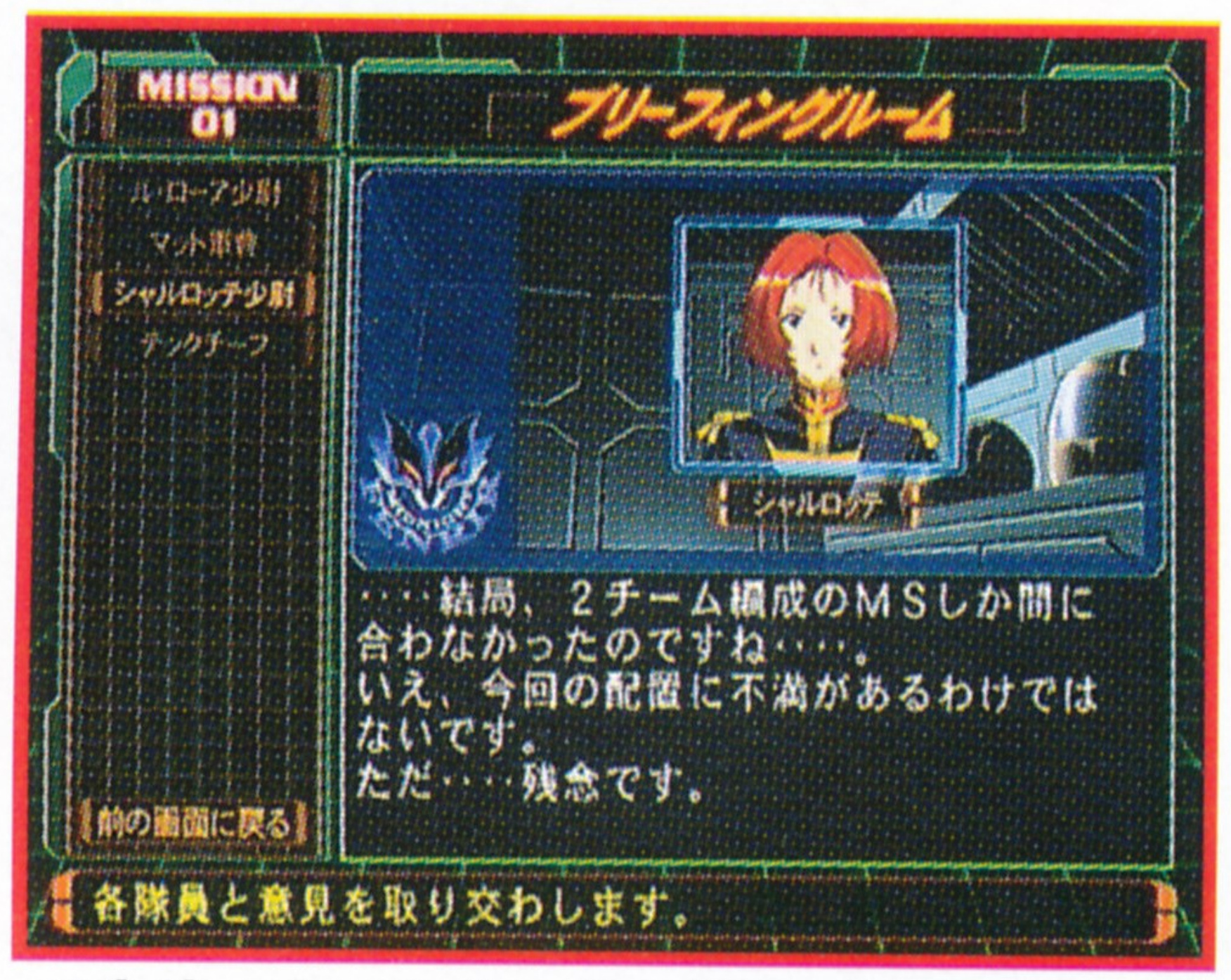
Nothing quite like Zeonic Front has ever appeared on an American console. It has a flair that we think will capture the mind of anyone who looks within its shell to find the depth it has to offer.





TEAM BLUE
SUPPORT
ADVANCE
MOVE
AVOID





ルローア少尉
マット軍曹
シャルロッテ少尉
テックチーフ
前の画面に戻る

・・・結局、2チーム構成のMSしか間に合わなかったのですね・・・。
いえ、今回の配置に不満があるわけではないです。
ただ・・・残念です。

各隊員と意見を取り交わします。

•While the Principality of Zeon is on the cutting edge in regards to weapons, no one can seem to convince them that combat green

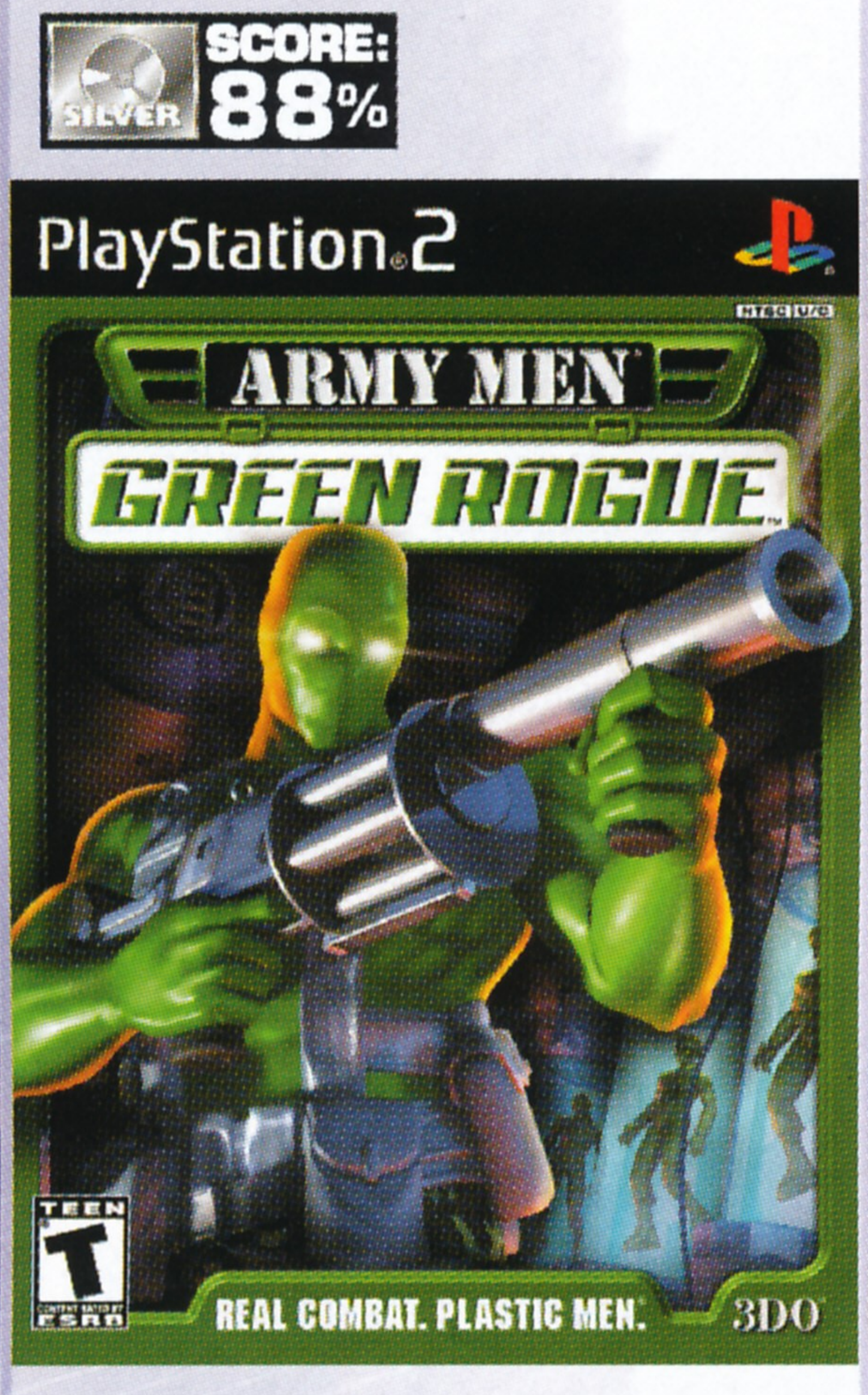
PlayStation 2
PORTAL RUNNER
Experience the Action. Live the Adventure.
EVERYONE
3DO

"...among the best of the first-year PS2 titles."

– Game Informer

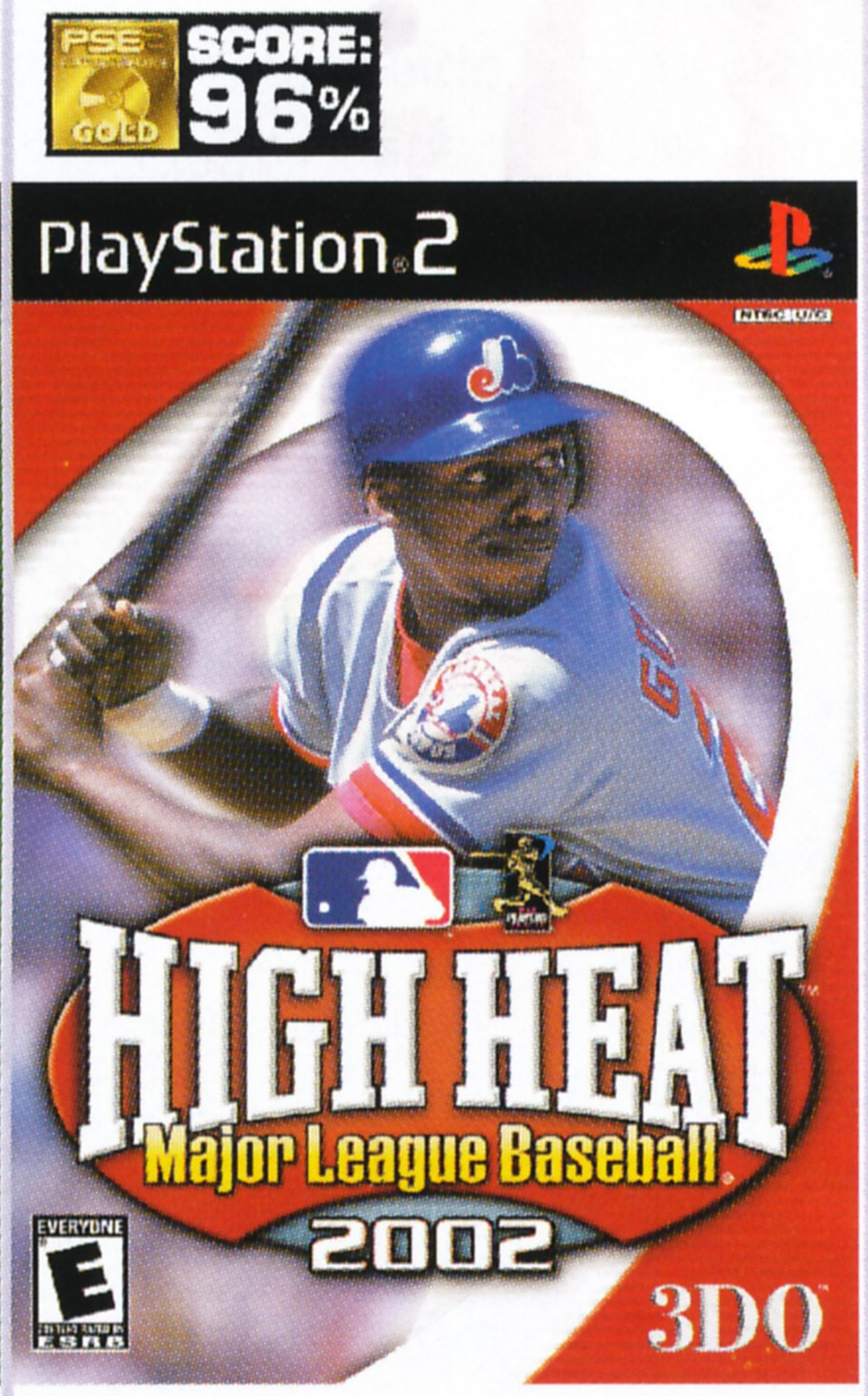
"...Tomb Raider meets Alice in Wonderland."

– PSE2


SILVER
SCORE: 88%
PlayStation 2
ARMY MEN
GREEN ROGUE
TEEN
REAL COMBAT. PLASTIC MEN.
3DO

"...fast, good looking, deep and fun."

– PSE2


PSE2 GOLD
SCORE: 96%
PlayStation 2
HIGH HEAT
Major League Baseball
2002
EVERYONE
3DO

"High Heat Hits Grand Slam with PS2 Debut"

– Gamepro

"HH is the first must-buy PS2 baseball game"

– OPM

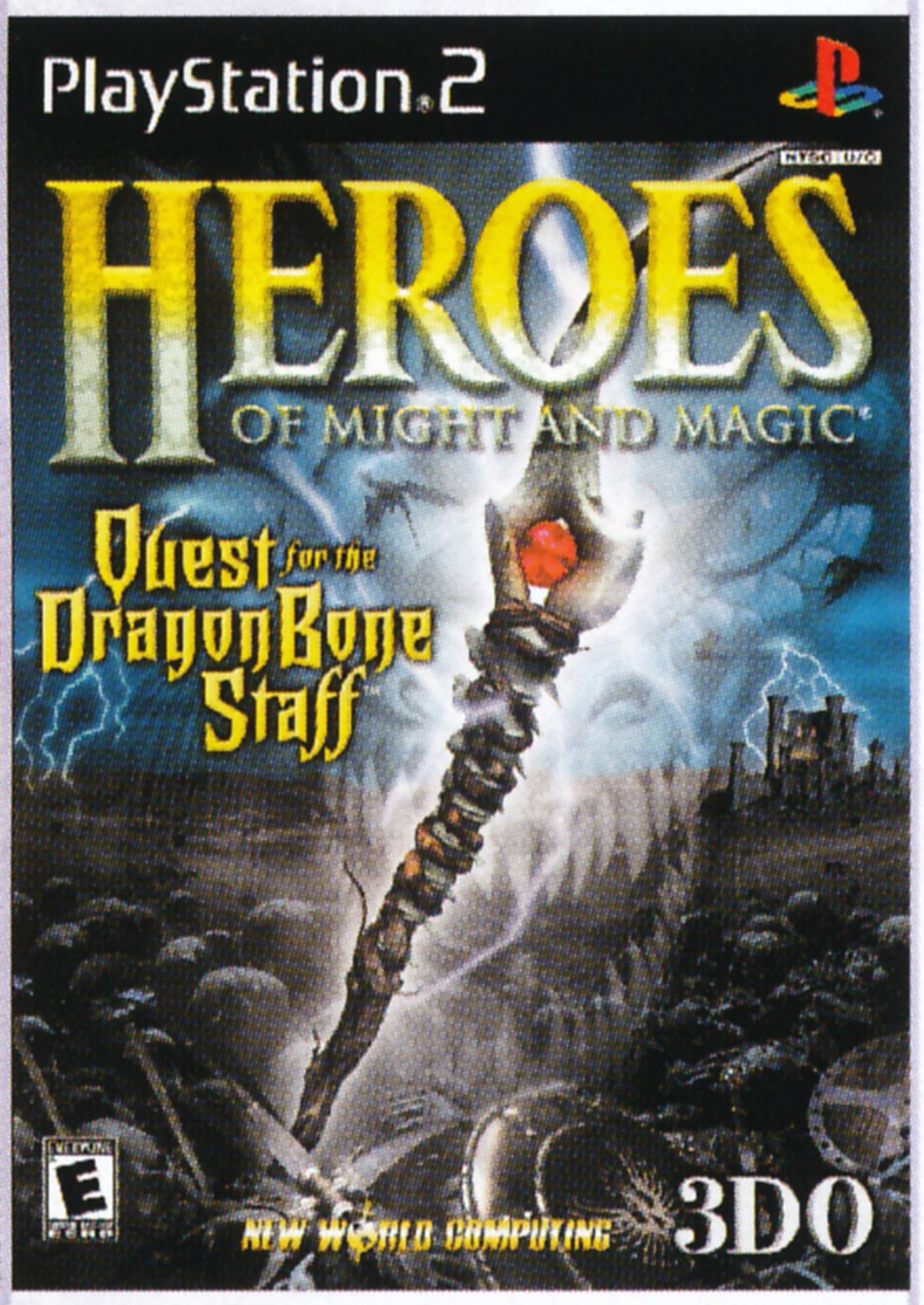
SILVER
SCORE: 85%
PlayStation 2
WARJETZ
TEEN
3DO

"...WarJetz packs the potential to outclass other games in the genre because of its over-the-top arcade-style gameplay."

– PS2.ign.com

"...3DO's ace in the hole.

– ZDNet:Gamespot


PlayStation 2
HEROES
OF MIGHT AND MAGIC
Quest for the DragonBone Staff
EVERYONE
NEW WORLD COMPUTING
3DO

"Everything about the game shines, it has immense replay value and will keep you interested for weeks. A fantastic title."

– videogamenews.net

"Fast, easy to learn, and the battles are incredibly fun...This is great stuff"

– Daily Radar

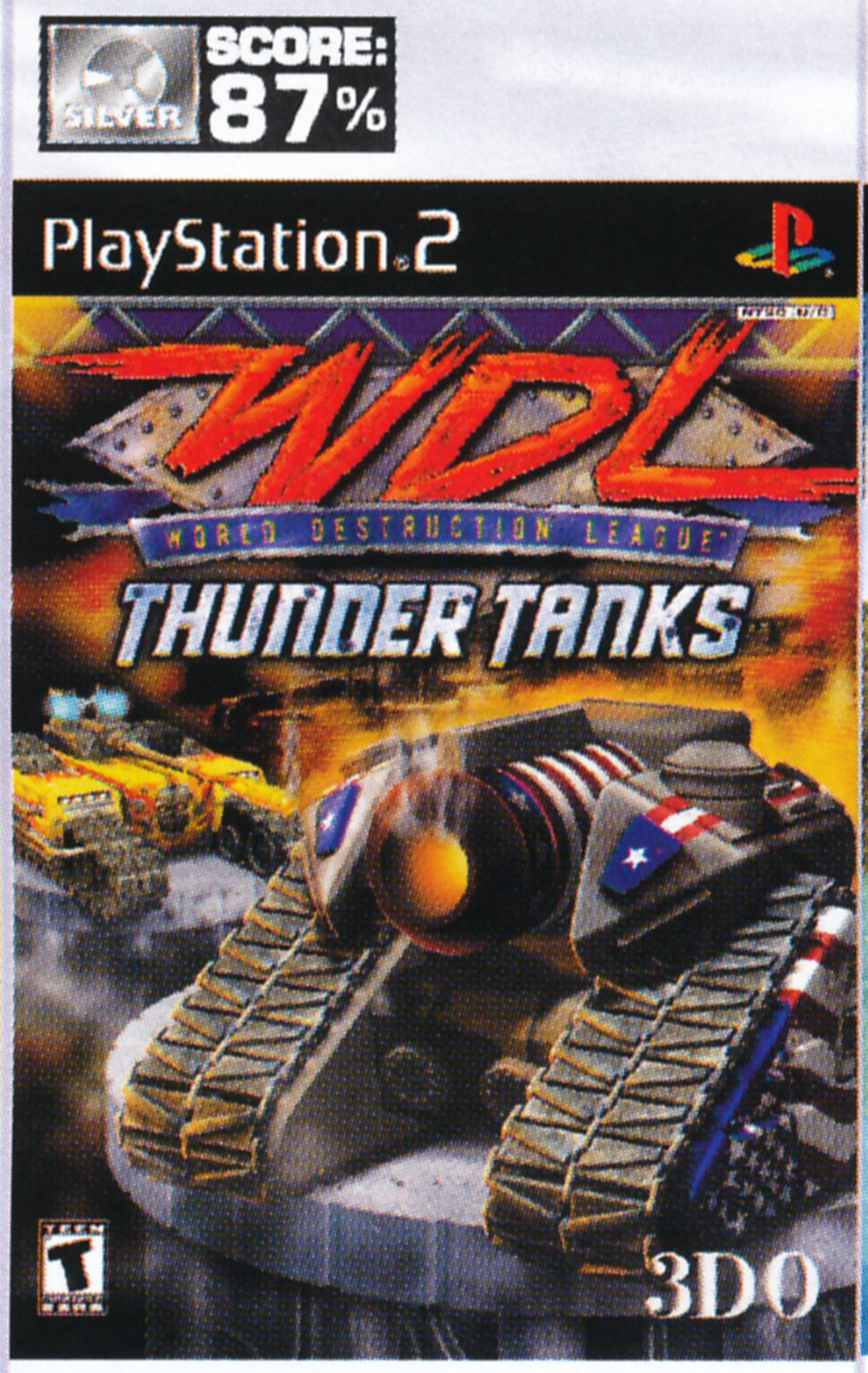
© 2001 The 3DO Company. All Rights Reserved. 3DO, Army Men, Army Men Air Attack, Green Rogue, Sarge's Heroes, Real Combat. Plastic Men., Heroes of Might and Magic, Quest for the DragonBone Staff, High Heat, Portal Runner, Warriors of Might and Magic, WDL, World Destruction League, Thunder Tanks, WarJetz, New World Computing, and their respective logos, are trademarks or registered trademarks of The 3DO Company in the U.S. and other countries. AquaAqua is a trademark of Zed Two Ltd. AquaAqua is published by The 3DO Company under license from Imagineer Co., Ltd. © MLBPA Official Licensee – Major League Baseball Players Association. Major League Baseball trademarks and copyrights are used with permission of Major League Baseball Properties, Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All other trademarks belong to their respective owners. New World Computing is a division of The 3DO Company.

10 REASONS TO PLAY HOOKY

PSE GOLD
SCORE: 93%
PlayStation.2
ARMY MEN
SARGE'S HEROES 2
MISSING
REAL COMBAT. PLASTIC MEN.
3DO

"...this one is now at the top of my list..."

– PSE2


SILVER
SCORE: 87%
PlayStation.2
WDL
WORLD DESTRUCTION LEAGUE
THUNDER TANKS
3DO

"...the game's multiplayer play value is almost without limit"

– PS2.ign.com

PlayStation.2
aqua aqua
THE ADDICTIVE, FAST-ACTION 3D PUZZLER!
ZED TWO
3DO

"...a very entertaining and addictive puzzler."

– PS2.ign.com

"...the game is fast, fun, addictive and cool to look at."

– happypuppy.com

PSE GOLD
SCORE: 94%
PlayStation.2
WARRIORS of Might and Magic
3DO

"...action-packed fun from start to finish."

– Daily Radar

PSE GOLD
SCORE: 93%
PlayStation.2
ARMY MEN
AIR ATTACK 2
REAL COMBAT. PLASTIC MEN.
3DO

"...the best Army Men® game yet"

– PS2.ign.com

PRODUCTS RANGE FROM EVERYONE TO TEEN
E-T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

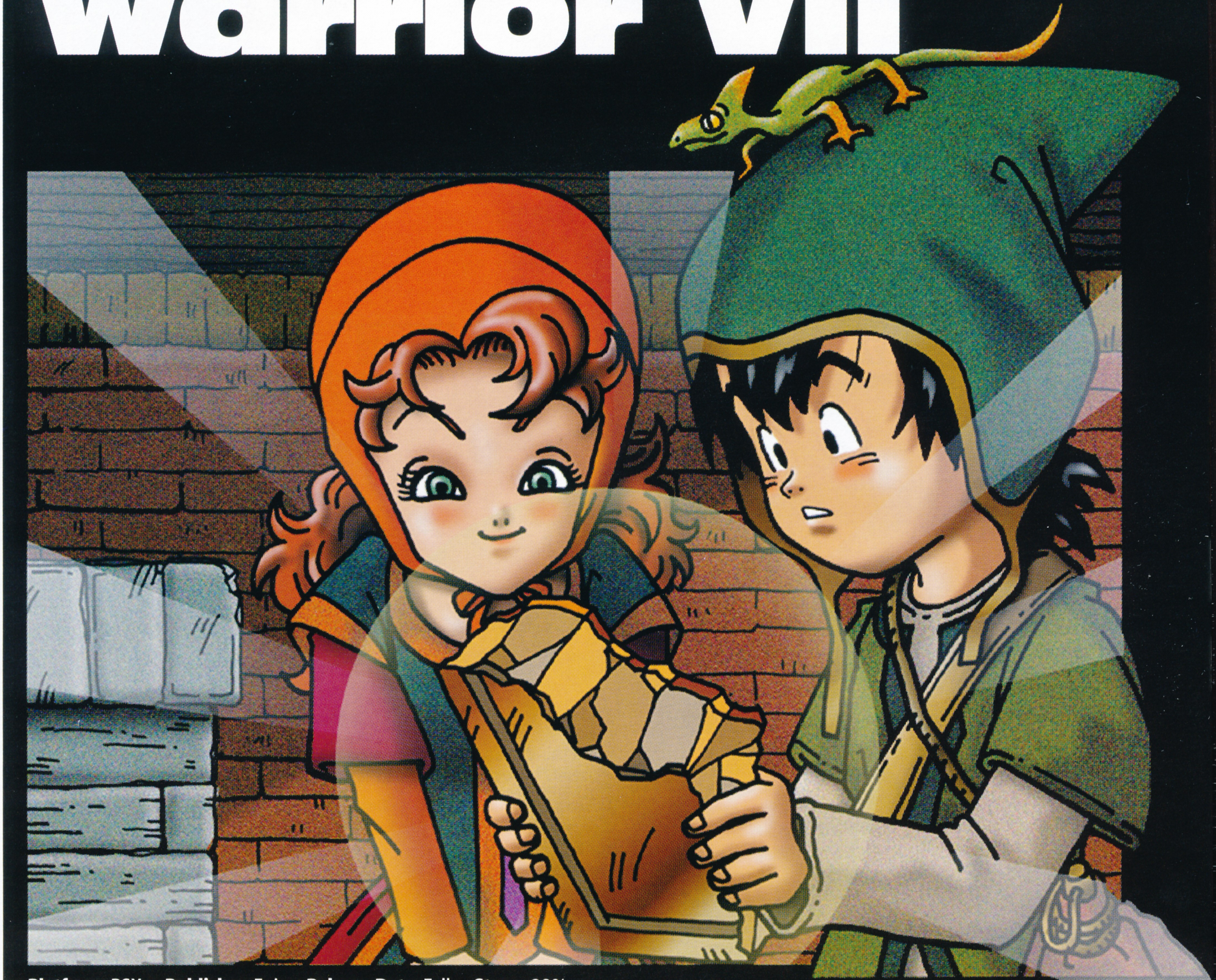
Visit www.esrb.org
or call 1-800-771-3772
for more info.

PlayStation®2

3DO™
www.3DO.com

COVER 2:

Dragon Warrior VII



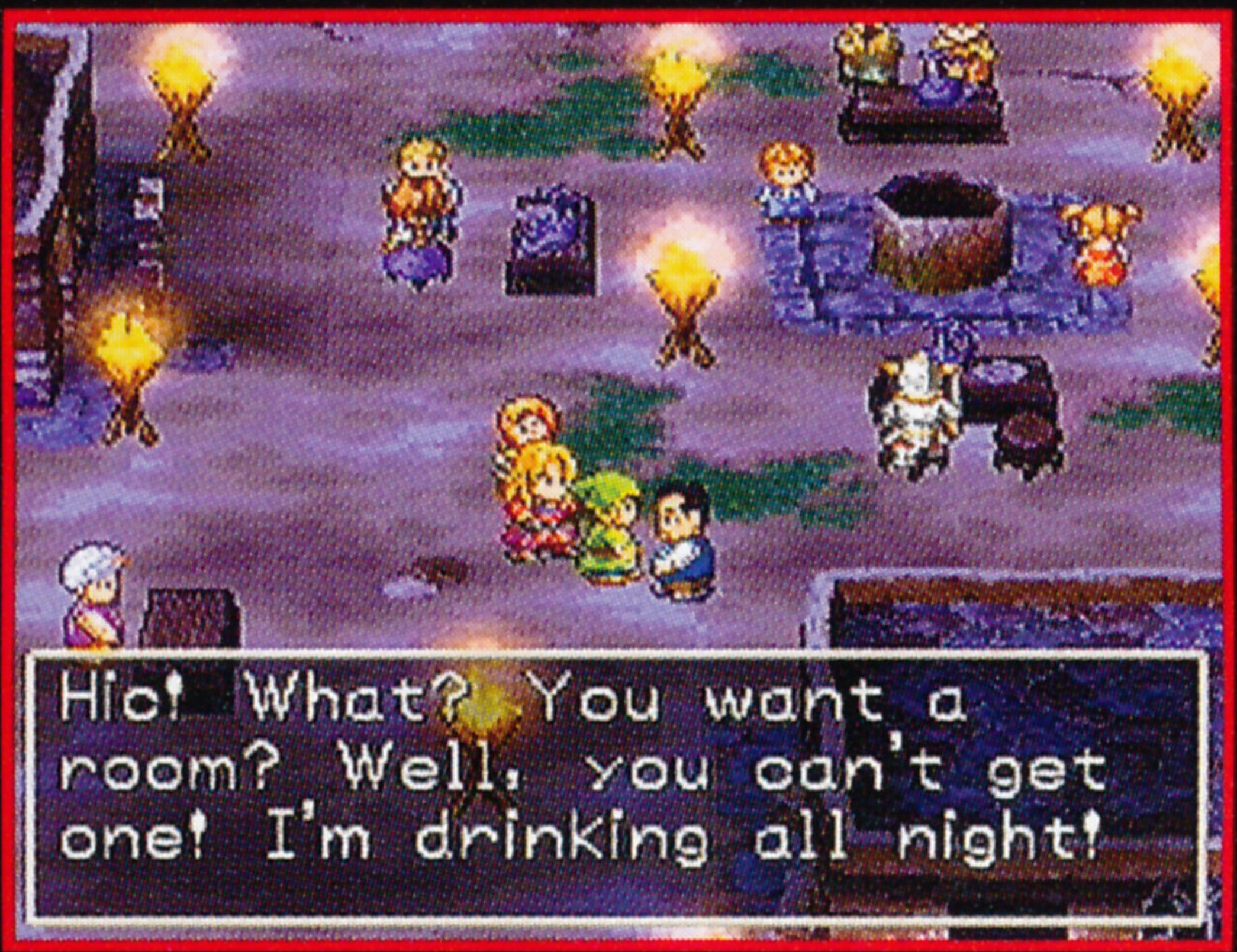
Platform: PSX • **Publisher:** Enix • **Release Date:** Fall • **Stage:** 90%

Before we give you a formal introduction to the world of Dragon Warrior VII, consider this intriguing statistic from Japan: By the end of the year 2000, DW VII, which was released on August 26, had sold 3.7 million copies. By comparison, Final Fantasy IX, which was released nearly two months earlier, had sold 2.6 million copies. While selling 2.6 million units in six months was a great achievement for Square, that number doesn't touch the overwhelming love Japanese gamers hold for the Dragon Warrior series. This November, American gamers will finally get to see why the numbers don't lie.

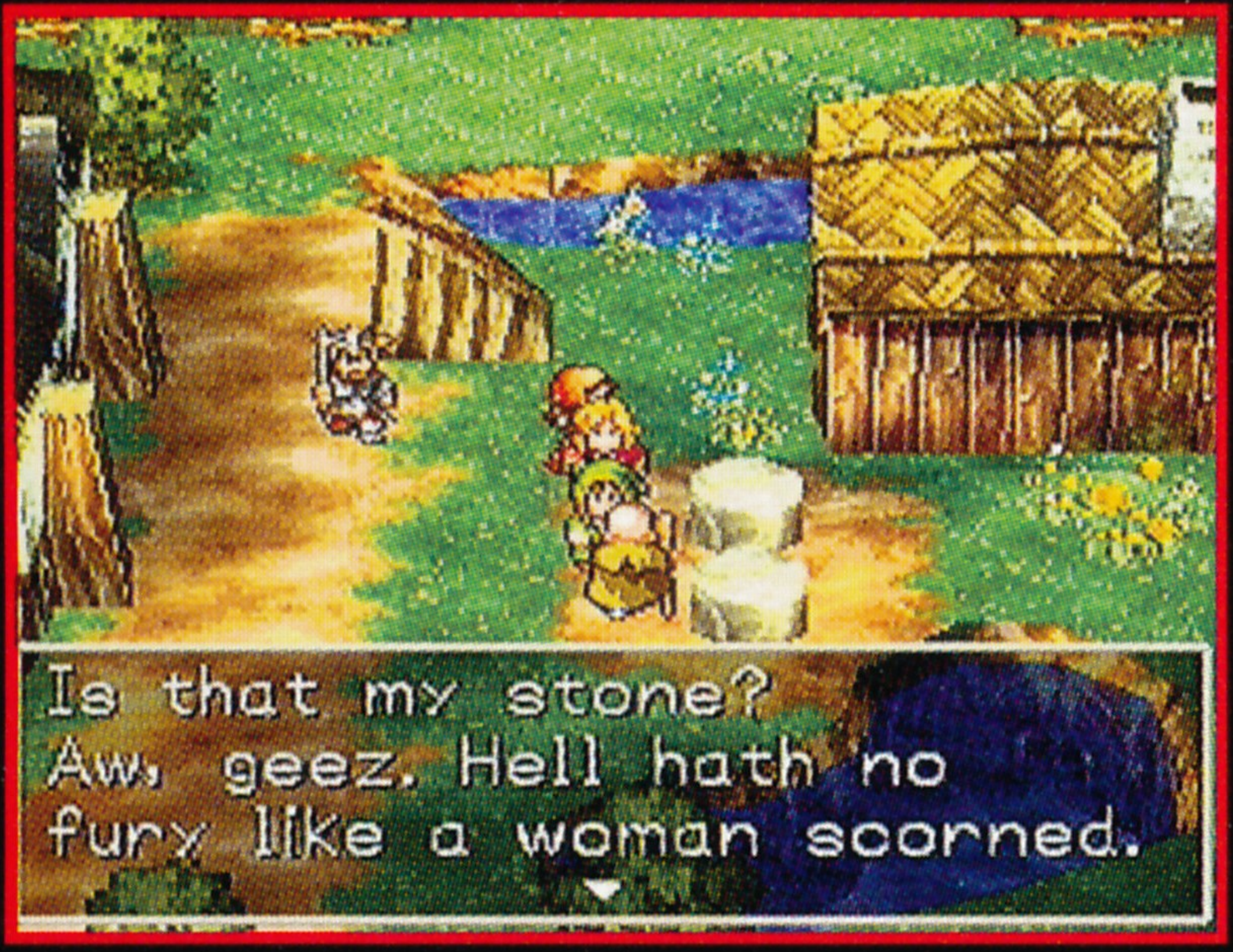
DW VII's hero (you will give him a name of your choosing) is an energetic young lad living in Fishbel, a small fishing town on the only island in the world. That's right, as inconceivable as it may seem, folks all over the island give personal testimonies that prove their home is the only land in existence. With this accepted reality as the foundation for their lives, the habitants live in harmony, and at the beginning of the story they have come together for the annual fish harvest. Once the boat has set sail, everyone returns to their daily activities, but with anticipation of its return. It is during that time that the hero, a.k.a. you, stumble across an amazing secret.

The adventure-seeking Prince Kiefer, always the troublemaker but unable to harm a soul, convinces you to help him unlock an ancient temple hidden in a nearby forest. There, a series of puzzles entices you to press further into its depths. After collecting the prized equipment of four Saints and affixing it to their respective monuments, you enter a chamber where more than a dozen pedestals beg for the restoration of magical crystals. At this point your adventuring has yielded several important-looking shards, and now you know what to do with them. Soon Maribel, a conceited but lovable female friend, figures out what you and Kiefer are up to. She threatens to spill the beans if she is not allowed to go along, so the three

•(Below) Kiefer finally tired of Maribel and the hero's public display, and tried to force them to get a room. Unfortunately, the innkeeper would not oblige



Hic! What? You want a room? Well, you can't get one! I'm drinking all night!



Is that my stone?
Aw, geez. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.

of you head to the chamber with the shards.

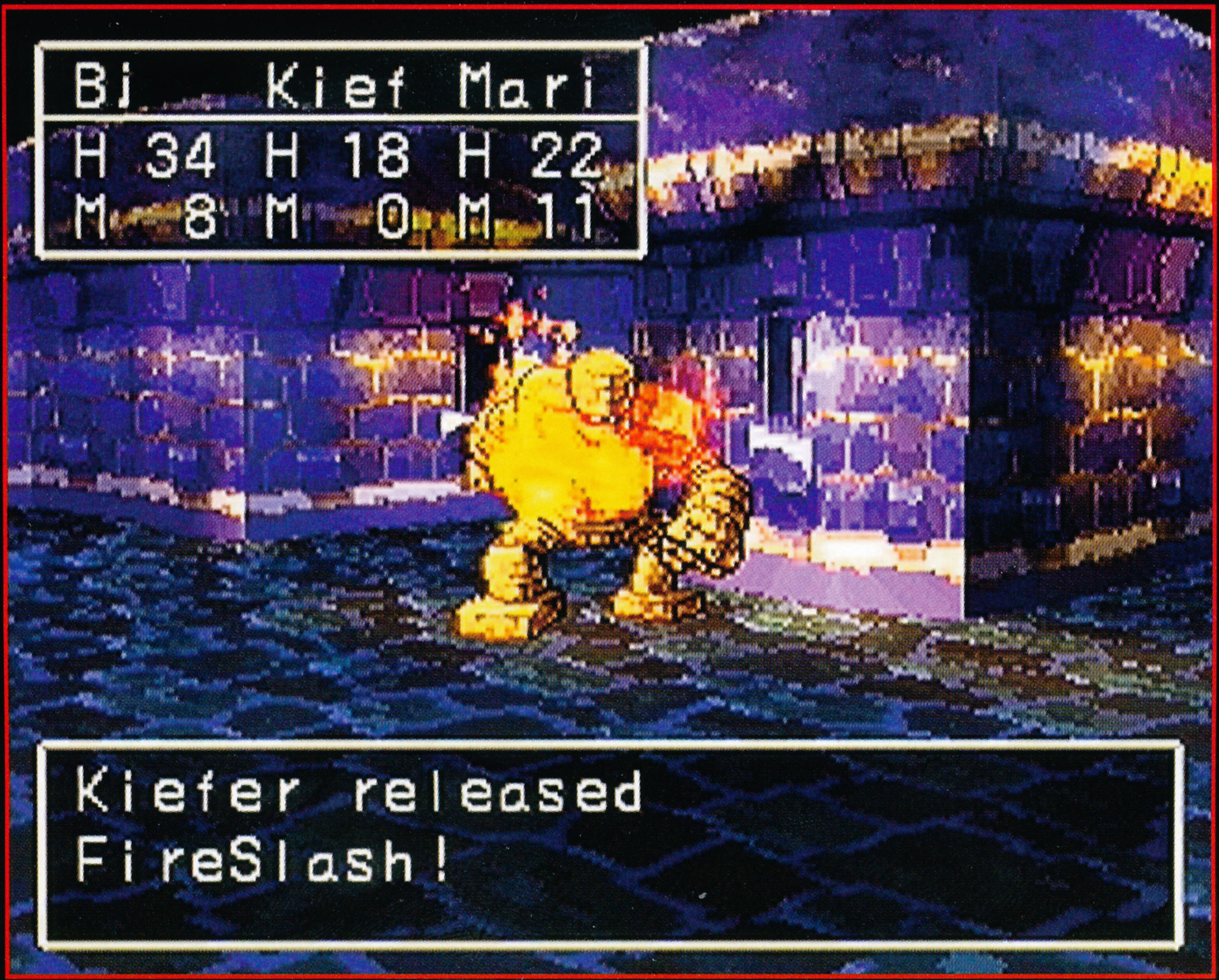
It's interesting to note that these first few hours of gameplay are devoid of fighting. There are some mind-bending puzzles and mazes, staples of any great Enix RPG, but the creators have saved the battle aspect for later so that you really get a sense of story and character development. These personalities are instantly likeable, and there is humor throughout. But don't worry, because there is plenty of fighting to do later.

After completing the first crystal, your party is warped to an island where monsters have taken over. You agree to help the natives, and after some harrowing mini-adventures you end up saving them from the monster menace. Returning to your homeland, you learn that a new island has appeared just north of yours! You and your friends travel there, and lo and behold, it's the very island you saved. Strangely, the residents insist that their island has always been there. What's more, they speak of your adventures there in the past tense, as if they happened centuries ago, and they have no idea who you are. (Now make a fist, raise your pinky, and touch it to the corner of your mouth with your palm facing out.)

Thus begins your quest to recover all of the lost shards. Each island you travel to has its own unique characters and related problems, and it's up to you to discover the evil behind the islands' disappearances. This is truly a unique story that resides well outside the normal "Save your planet from the Gaia-wielding bad guy" type plot (not that there's anything wrong with that). Moreover, everything has that special Enix touch that elevates the game to a level others cannot match. The eloquent storytelling is riddled with humor and dialogue is well scripted.

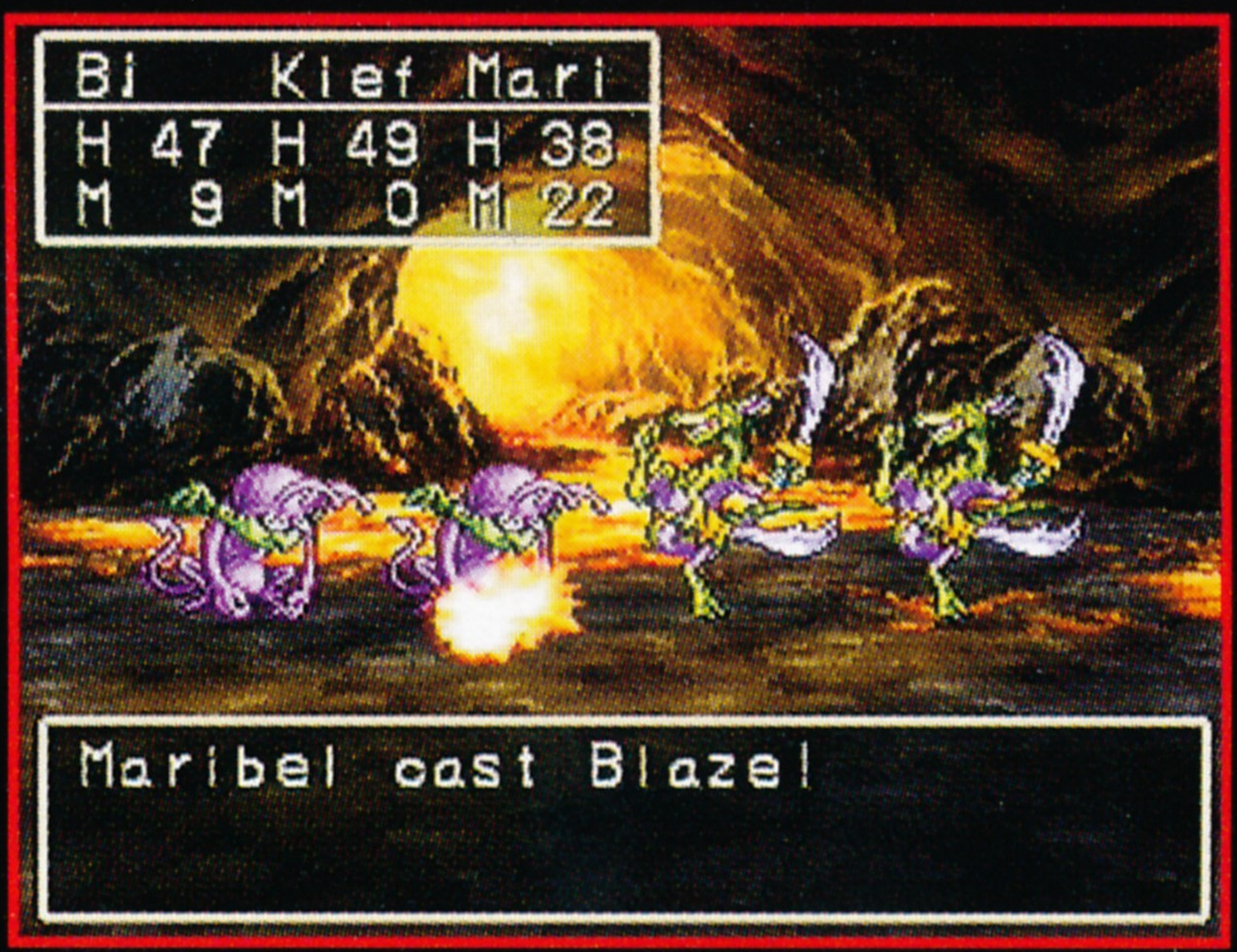
So what should you expect from this addition to the long running series? From what we've seen so far, you can expect a ton of smart puzzles. This aspect of the game gets underway almost immediately and is complemented by equilibrium-stirring mazes. You can also be sure that once the fighting begins, you'll be doing battle every few steps. This means, as with all Dragon Warrior titles, that you'll need to concentrate on leveling up your characters to avoid being severely outclassed by enemies. These aspects of the series have been known to cause some frustration in the past, but any fan should know (and any RPGer should understand) that the overall experience is guaranteed to be worth the trouble. Trust us when we say that Dragon Warrior VII will be an epic tale RPGers won't want to miss.

DW VII: Life support for PSX



```
Bi   Kief Mari
H 34 H 18 H 22
M  8 M  0 M 11
```

Kiefer released FireSlash!



```
Bi   Kief Mari
H 47 H 49 H 38
M  9 M  0 M 22
```

Maribel cast Blaze!

•After much deliberation, the group decided they wouldn't be eating chili on the trail anymore

Estard Isle
N

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Mild Language
Mild Violence
Suggestive Themes

Enix summoned
lightning from Netherworld!

In the world, only this island is...

PlayStation
NTSC U/C
DRAGON WARRIOR
VII
TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
SLUS-01206/01346
2 DISCS
ENIX

www.enix.com

CG. Illustration by Shintaro Majima. © 2001 ARMOR PROJECT/BIRD STUDIO/HEART BEAT/ARTE PIAZZA/ENIX. Dragon Warrior and ENIX are registered trademarks of Enix Corporation. All Rights Reserved. PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All Rights Reserved.

From The How Else Are You Going To Watch All Of That Japanese Hentai? Department:

A new all-code DVD player called DVD Region X has been released for PS2. It will allow users to watch DVD movies from any DVD region. It works by plugging the DVD Region X system card into Memory Card Slot 1 and booting up the machine using the DVD Region X software. Look for it at an import store near you!

From The How About A Little Role Playing, Baby? Department:

Enix has officially announced Dragon Warrior IV for Playstation, for both America and Japan. This PSX remake will feature revamped graphics and game systems, including 3D overworld views and the companion conversation system from Dragon Warrior VII. New jobs, such as Merchant, will also be added to the already existing DWIV job system.

The characters from Sony's Legaia: Duel Saga have been revealed. Rangu is a 17 year old warrior, Maya is a 14 year old mage, Kazan is a 48 year old fighter, Avaron is Rangu's rival, and Syaron is a 20 year old girl who wants to become a famous treasure hunter. The Tactical Art System from the last game will be enhanced in Legaia: Duel Saga. During the battles the Tactical Arts System will be used to attack the enemies and the use of different button combos to execute the attacks could make it play like many fighting games.

Enterbrain will release the fifth Japanese installment of their RPG Maker series, this time on PS2. However, this time players will be able to create a 3D RPG! Once again, as always seems to be the case, no word on an American release of this title.

Konami's Playstation 2 RPG Suikoden III will mark the move of this series from 2D into full 3D. It will also feature three different main characters in the game. Each character will have a different take on the events in the game. There will be three times as many characters and an "improved" battle system. Suikoden III is currently scheduled for release this December in Japan.

From The Chalk One Up For The Otaku Department:

Sega of America has stated that the U.S. version of Shenmue II will not have English voice-overs. It will use the original Japanese voice-overs with English subtitles.

From The It May Be Square, But The GameCube Information Just Keeps Rolling In Department:

After the N64 debacle, not having a Killer (pun intended) fighting game during its first few months, Nintendo has learned its lesson. Namco will deliver Soul Calibur 2 to the GameCube after the arcade version is released.

Left Field Studios is preparing 1080 Snowboarding 2 for the GameCube.

Nintendo revealed the GameCube GBA Cable at Spaceworld 2001. This cable will allow the exchange of data between GameCube and Game Boy Advance and allow the GBA to be used as an input controller for GameCube. Additional functions include the ability to download mini games from GameCube and play them on the GBA (Finally! A VMU/Pocketstation type device we can play more than 15 minutes before the batteries go dead). One of the first titles to use this feature will be Animal Forest.

As we reported in Accessing last month, Nintendo announced that the U.S. launch of GameCube will be delayed by 2 weeks from November 5 to November 18. The explanation given was that this would allow them to increase the initial shipment numbers from 500,000 units to 700,000 units. It will also allow them to release them in both Jet Black and Burnt Orange.

Sonic Team will bring Sonic Adventure 2 out on the GameCube. Also, Sega is working on a Game Boy Advance title called The House of the Dead Pinball. Yep, you guessed it; it's a pinball simulation based on the HOTD games.

Kemco is working on a GameCube title called Universal Studios. It will be a theme park simulation game featuring items from the Universal Studios tours. These include rides based on Universal movies like Jurassic Park, Back to the Future, Back Draft, E.T. and Jaws.

Nintendo of Japan has a few different network adapters on the way for GameCube. The narrowband 56K modem will enable users to access the Internet over phone lines, while the broadband adapter will allow users to access the Internet using high speed connections such as DSL or cable modems. The first online GameCube title is Phantasy Star Online Ver. 2, which is scheduled for a March 2002 release.

The GameCube controller has gone through some changes since we saw it a E3. The A (red) and B (green) buttons have been changed from analog to digital buttons. The C-Stick (yellow analog button) will have a wider contact surface, and the L/R button will have a deeper valley to make them easier to press down. The material that it is made of has changed as well. The final version will be similar to the PS2 controller.

From The Advancing Handhelds To The Next Level Department:

Victor Interactive's GBA RPG Sansara Saga 1X2 should hit Japan this fall. It is a remake of the dragon breeding RPGs Sansara Saga 1 and 2. Gamers will play as a boy who wishes to become a Dragon Master and travels around the world collecting dragon eggs.

Sammy will be doing a GBA version of Guilty Gear X.

Nintendo will unleash Super Mario Advance 2 for GBA. This remake of Super Mario World is scheduled for release in Japan in January 2002.

Capcom is working on a "new" Game Boy Advance fighting title called Street Fighter Zero 3 Upper.

Tecmo will take their Monster Rancher series to the GBA with Monster Rancher Advance. Based on the system found in Monster Rancher 2, Monster Rancher Advance will let players raise, train, and enter their monsters in tournaments.

From The Seaman News That Won't Make The Pages Stick Together Department:

ASCII and Vivarium are doing a PS2 Seaman. This sequel will come packaged with a Seaman Controller, which has a built-in microphone.

From The Brand New, Brand Name Game Department:

3DO has recently acquired the exclusive publishing rights for the hot new CGI-animated Kids' WB! series entitled "Cubix: Robots for Everyone." 3DO will be releasing an upcoming PSone videogame, based on this license, called Cubix Robots for Everyone: Race N' Robots, available just in time to place under the tree for Christmas.

TDK Mediactive has announced they have the exclusive North American publishing and distribution rights for games based on the Mercedes-Benz license. TDK also announced that the first Mercedes-Benz title is scheduled to ship sometime in 2002. No platform has been announced.

From The Find A Place For These Stories Department:

Namco will release the Playstation 2 port of their hit arcade fighting game Tekken 4 in Japan in mid-November. The PS2 home version will have a number of new features not found in the arcade version.

Capcom has announced that they will release Megaman X6 for the Playstation in Japan this November. The story will take place 3 weeks after Megaman X5. It is up to Megaman to (spoilers ahead if you have not beaten Megaman X5!) find out whether Zero is dead or alive after the conclusion of the last game.

The last Resident Evil PS2 release? Capcom will release the Playstation 2 light gun shooting game Gun Survivor 2: Resident Evil Code Veronica in Japan on November 8, which is the same day as the GunCon 2 bundle pack will be released.

Not everyone has upgraded to the PS2. The #8 best selling game in America during August was none other the Madden 2002…for the PSX. Hey, a great game is great on any system, right?

Eidos has announced that they will release TimeSplitters 2 for XBox in early 2002, shortly after the release of the PS2 version.

Decrypted: Codes and Cheats for October 2001

Devil May Cry (PS2):

Tips For Defeating the Nightmare Boss:
With its relentless barrages and impenetrable armor goo, Nightmare is quite the resilient foe. The only way to damage this beast is to attack its core. This is the spherical mass of energy that pops out when you attack the timer on the wall (there are four timers when you first encounter Nightmare, and only one when you face it later). It's best to keep moving, especially when it fires its needle attack.

When the battle begins, ignore the timer and immediately jump into the slime, doing your best to avoid any projectiles. Allow the slime to capture you, and you will be transported to the belly of the beast. Here, approach each skull and disperse it with your shotgun (each requires two shots, except for the last one). When you kill Cyclops, you will face a lesser iteration of each of the bosses you have fought before; the first time you fight Nightmare you face the Spider, the second time you will battle the Griffon, etc. By now you should have a good idea of how best to fight these creatures. After that, you will return to the surface to see a large chunk of Nightmare's health diminish.

Attack the wall timer. Try to stay as close to Nightmare as possible to keep it from spewing those slimy creatures that pursue Dante like grade school girls chasing the Backstreet Boys. Since Dante's roll is so quick, we used it for nearly every maneuver. Plus, it keeps him low enough to avoid horizontal attacks. Trigger Dante's Devil state as soon as possible. We found it best to equip Ifrit and, while triggered, attack the core with rapid punch/kick combos (Dante's Devil form can unleash these attacks very rapidly). We do not recommend using the Alastor, because in Devil state Dante has a hard time targeting the core with his special abilities (he targets anything the beast releases).

Tips For Defeating Mundus:
Important- Save your Devil Stars!! You will undoubtedly need them here.
(First Encounter) You will find yourself flying towards Mundus. His attacks are pretty easy to dodge. Keep firing with X at the core in his chest, and when your Devil Triggers are full, tap L1 to unleash a devastating attack. Two or three of these should take him down. DO NOT use your Devil Stars yet!
(Second Encounter) This is the best (and most difficult) part of the game. Mundus will be surrounded by rotating platforms, which he smashes regularly. Again, his weakness is the core in his chest. Don't attempt to jump onto the platforms. Instead, watch Mundus' movements so you can learn how he signals each attack. Equip your Grenade Gun and Sparda's Sword. Attack the fiery dragon as soon as it appears, and try to keep those nasty energy balls at bay, too. Now you can use your Devil Stars! With your Devil Triggers full, wait for Mundus to smash the rocks and avoid taking damage by leaping to one side. Immediately tap L1 to activate Devil state, and then fire Grenades into the core. In Devil state, Dante fires very rapidly, and a ball of flame accompanies each rocket. When your triggers expire, use a Devil Star and repeat the process.
(Third Encounter) This isn't nearly as difficult as the previous encounter. Equip Ifrit and attack Mundus with punch/kick combos while in Devil state. His vitality will drop very quickly.

Madden 2002 (PS2):

Win With The St. Louis Rams:
As everyone knows, we are based out of St. Louis and while Madden 2002 doesn't have a general "Money Play" that works for every team, some plays do work extremely well for certain teams. Here are some "Money Plays" for the St. Louis Rams that exploit the fast receivers and strong backs of this high powered offense.
Money Play 1:
Offense: Singleback-4WR /Flare Pass
Have Bruce and Holt head downfield on fly patterns, while Proehl runs a slant and Hakim runs a post. This spreads the defense out downfield. Pick the open man of your choice but don't worry if all receivers are covered. Simply dump the ball off to Mr. Faulk in the backfield and run for an average twenty to thirty yard gain since all of the opposition's defensive weapons are following your receivers.

Money Play 2:
Offense: Split Backs-Normal/HB Off Tackle:
Have Marshall Faulk take the handoff from the left backfield position, heading to the right. Follow the pulling line up and around the corner. If Faulk can break a tackle in the secondary, he can go for major yardage and, usually, a touchdown.

Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2 (PS2):

Unlock All Bikes:
Enter the following code at the Main Menu: Up, Left, Down, Right, Down, Down, Right, Down, Down, Left, ■.

Unlock Amish Boy:
Enter the following cheat at the Main Menu: Up, Left, Down, Right, Right, Left,Left, Down, Up, Left, ■

Unlock Colin Mackay's Competition Outfit:
At the main menu and press Up, Down, Right, Down, Up, Right, Right, Up, ■

Unlock Dave Mirra's Competition Outfit:
At the main menu and press Up, Down, Up, Down, Right, Left, Up, Up, ■

World's Scariest Police Chases (PSX):

Unlock All Bonuses:
At the Main Menu, press Left, Right, L1, R1, ●, ■, R2, L2.

Unlock All Missions:
At the main menu, press Down, Up, Left, Right, X, ▲, ●, ■.

Unlock All Starting Locations (Patrol Mode):
At the Main Menu, press Down, Up, L2, L1, X, ▲, R2, R1.

Unlock Everything:
At the main menu, press LEFT, RIGHT, L1, R1, ●, ■, R2, L2

NFL Gameday 2002 (PSX):

Various Cheat Codes:
Go to the Cheat Code screen and enter the following codes:

989 SPORTS: Team 989
FASHION SHOW: Cheerleaders' pictures will appear after the game
BASKETBALL: All players will be named after NBA superstars.
BIG PIG: Big balls
CREDITS: Shows game credits
ENDURANCE: Gives players more endurance
EURO LEAGUE: Players are named after NFL Europe "stars"
FATIGUE: Reduces player fatigue
GRUDGE MATCH: Unlock Gameday stadium.
LINE BUSTER: Enhances defensive line
OVAL OFFICE: Players will be named after U.S. Presidents
PENCILS: Players thin and tall
POP WARNER: Players float
SUPER FOOT: Super running backs
TINY: Big and Fat

Klonoa 2 (PS2):

Play as Mometsuto:
Successfully complete the game to unlock Mometsuto as a playable character.

Unlock Bonus Levels:
Collect all six stars in a level to get a doll. A bonus level will be unlocked after you have accumulated eight dolls and sixteen dolls.

Music Box:
Complete either bonus level to unlock songs in the music box

option. Try and tell us that's not pretty cool!

Boss Battles and Art Gallery:
Complete the fairground levels to unlock a new area that allows you to battle previously defeated bosses.

Hogs Of War (PSX):

Extra Promotion Points:
Successfully complete the entire game, then re-start a new game to have 250 promotion points.

Promote Your Porkers:
Enter 'Naughty Pigs' as your team name to promote all of your pigs to their highest levels.

Pig, Heal Thyself:
Heal yourself with a medi-gun by pointing the gun straight up in the air and firing.

View FMV's:
Enter "PRYING PIGS" as a team name.

Team Lard:
Enter "MARDY PIGS" as a team name.

Bonus FMV:
Enter "WATTA PORK" as a team name.

City Crisis (PS2):

Chase Car Mode:
Earn an A rating in all missions and an S on the Bus Chase

Disaster Mode:
Achieve an S rating in Final Rescue Mode to unlock Disaster Mode

Final Rescue Mode:
To unlock the Final Rescue Mode, earn an S rating with the Sports Car chase.

XG3 Extreme G Racing (PS2):

Unlimited Turbo:
To get unlimited turbo, go to the title screen and Press R1+L1, R2+L2, R1+L1, R2+L2.

Unlock Infinite Ammo:
To unlock infinite ammo, pause the game and press L2, R2, L1, R1, L2+R2, L1+R1.

Unlock Infinite Shields:
To unlock infinite shields, pause the game and press L1+R1, L2+R2, L1+L2, R1+R2.

Unlock all Tracks:
To unlock all of the tracks in the game, go to the main menu and press L1, L1, L2, L2, R2, R2, R1, R1, then L1+R1+L2+R2.

NCAA Football 2002 (PS2):

In Your Face:
If you have broken that last tackle and are screaming in for a touchdown, why not just show off a little? Start the celebration early by hitting one of the following buttons on your way to an easy 6.

R2: Hold up the football
L1 or R1: Point at the sky
L2: Grip and shake the ball

The Name Of The Game:
While the players in NCAA are usually called by their numbers, you can go in, edit, and add their real life names. NCAA 2002 does include the voice-overs for a multitude of names.

Super Street Fighter IIX Revival (GBA):

Easy Special Moves:
While fighting in a single player battle, press Up(2), Down(2), Left, Right, Left, Right, B, A. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound. This will allow you to pull off special moves with easy inputs. For example, while playing as Ryu press Forward + Punch for the Fireball, and the "normal" Fireball move now does the Dragon punch. Press Select to toggle "Easy Special Mode" on or off.

Play as Akuma:
Accumulate 5000 points to unlock Akuma

Play as Shin Akuma:
Accumulate 9999 points to unlock Shin Akuma

Resident Evil: Code Veronica X (PS2):

Rocket Launcher:
Complete the main game of Code Veronica X with an "A" ranking to earn the Rocket Launcher. To get an "A" rating, you must not use a First Aid Spray, not save your game, not retry, save Steve, give the Medicine to Rodriguez and finish in under four hours, thirty minutes. Good freaking luck. If you do manage it, when you start a new game after getting the "A" rating, the Launcher will be available from the first Item Box.

Unlock Battle Game:
Beat CVX to unlock the Battle Game. Chris and Claire will be available as playable characters.

Unlock Steve in Battle Game:
In the underground Save Room with Chris complete the drawer puzzle in the corner. Grab the Gold Luger to unlock Steve.

Unlock Wesker in Battle Game:
Beat the Battle Game with Chris.

Tony Hawk 2 (N64):

Perfect Balance:
Pause the game, then Press and hold L, then press C-DOWN, RIGHT, DOWN, C-LEFT, C-DOWN, C-UP, C-RIGHT, C-LEFT. If done correctly, the pause screen will shake.

Infinite Money:
Pause the game then hold L, and press C-LEFT, C-LEFT, UP, C-RIGHT, C-UP, DOWN. When entered correctly, the pause screen will shake.

Make Skater's Stats 10:
Pause the game then hold L, and press DOWN, UP, C-UP, C-LEFT, DOWN, UP, C-UP.

Make Skater's Stats 13:
Pause the game then hold L, and press C-DOWN, C-RIGHT, C-RIGHT, C-UP, UP, DOWN, RIGHT, LEFT.

High Heat Baseball 2002 (PS2):

Charge The Mound:
Yeah, we knew it was in there and we know you want it!
When a batter for your team gets hit by a pitch, hold down L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 and the batter will start to walk towards the mound and make a few choice gestures with his hands. Continue to hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 and press X and the batter will charge the mound and both teams will clear the benches and have a good old fashioned fight. Just remember, after the fight has ended, your batter will be ejected from the game for fighting.

ICO (PS2):

How to defeat the Queen:
The energy sword is the key to beating the Queen. Whenever it is in your possession, her shadow attacks cannot harm you. To beat the Queen, hack at her shield with the energy sword. Every time you hit her shield, the sword will fly from your hand and you'll have to retrieve it. Be careful! Without the sword, her attacks can kill you immediately.

Once you hit her shield, run behind one of two statues at the center of the room. Her shadow attack will pass you by. From behind the safety of the statues, look around the room for the energy sword. The first time you lose it, it will end up in the right side of the room. The next three times, you will find it on the left side of the room. After four sword hits, the queen's shield will break and the energy sword should end up behind the statue.

Now, hide behind the right statue. As the shadow attack passes, you will notice a safe area on the ground in the shape of a circle. Get as far back in the safe area as possible. As soon as the shadow wave passes, head straight back from the statue to grab the sword. You should reach it just as her next shadow wave reaches you. With the protection of the energy sword, rush the Queen and deliver the final blow.

Secret Ending:
After you beat the Queen and the credits roll, another movie will play and then you will take control of ICO on the beach. Move down the coast to the left to unlock the secret ending.

Code not work?
decrypted@siliconmagazine.com

12 ISSUES FOR UNDER 10 BUCKS

SUBSCRIBE TODAY and you're also entered to win a **FREE** copy of Koei's Winback!

SUBSCRIBE AND YOU WILL:

•SM SILICON MAG

Yes! I want Silicon Mag. I'll receive 12 information packed issues for only $9.95- **just 83¢ an issue!**

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

☐Check or money order enclosed. (ALL Canadian -Canada rules!- and international orders must be prepaid in U.S. funds at $29.99/year.)

☐Visa ☐Mastercard ☐Discover Card ☐American Express

Card #: ______________ Exp. Date: ______

Cardholder Signature: ______________

Please allow 8-10 weeks for first mailed issue. 10/01T

SILICON
Dead or Alive 2
A game that is as deadly as it is beautiful
SILICON
Onimusha Warlords

SUBSCRIBE and you'll never miss another issue!

SILICON
South Park Rally
SILICON
Rockstar Games:

GET •SM FIRST

•SM SILICON MAG

Yes! I want Silicon Mag. I'll receive 12 information packed issues for only $9.95- **just 83¢ an issue!**

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

☐Check or money order enclosed. (ALL Canadian -Canada rules!- and international orders must be prepaid in U.S. funds at $29.99/year.)

☐Visa ☐Mastercard ☐Discover Card ☐American Express

Card #: ______________ Exp. Date: ______

Cardholder Signature: ______________

Please allow 8-10 weeks for first mailed issue. 10/01B

SILICON
Dead or Alive 2
SILICON
South Park Rally

SUBSCRIBE and you'll never miss another issue!

SILICON
Onimusha Warlords
SILICON
Rockstar Games:

GET •SM DELIVERED

SUBSCRIBE AND YOU WILL:

NAME (PLEASE PRINT) ____________________

ADDRESS ____________________

CITY/STATE/ZIP ____________________

PLACE IN ENVELOPE FOR SECURITY

•SM
SILICON MAG
PO BOX 9421
St. Louis, MO 63117

GET •SM FIRST

NAME (PLEASE PRINT) ____________________

ADDRESS ____________________

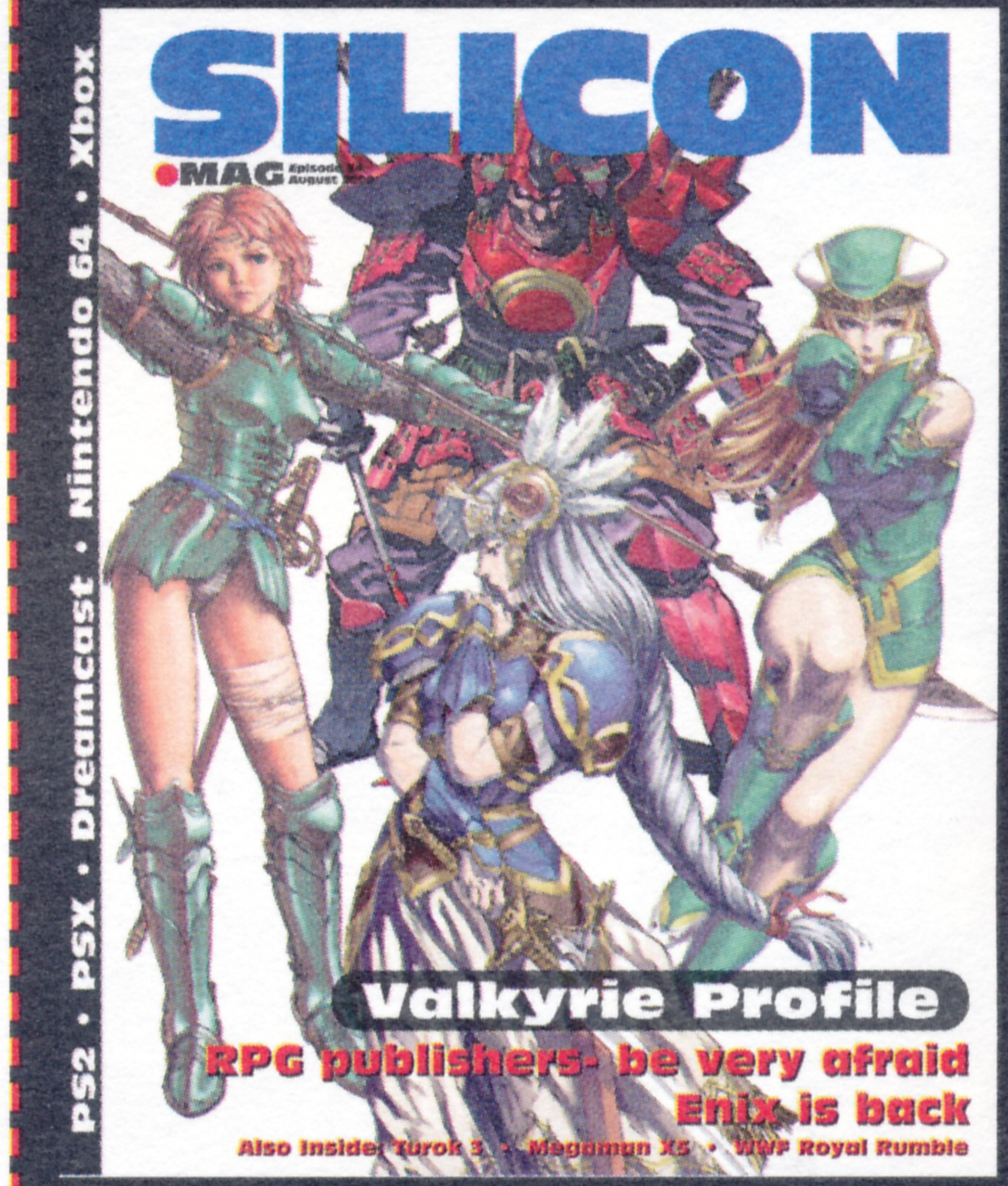
CITY/STATE/ZIP ____________________

PLACE IN ENVELOPE FOR SECURITY

•SM
SILICON MAG
PO BOX 9421
St. Louis, MO 63117

GET •SM DELIVERED

12 ISSUES FOR *UNDER* 10 BUCKS


SILICON
•MAG Episode August
PS2 • PSX • Dreamcast • Nintendo 64 • Xbox
Valkyrie Profile
RPG publishers- be very afraid
Enix is back
Also inside: Turok 3 • Megaman X5 • WWF Royal Rumble

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

Kick Some Rusty Metal Butt!

PlayStation 2
MOBILE SUIT
GUNDAM
JOURNEY TO JABURO™

Marvel at the detailed battlefield scenes and mobile suits with breathtaking digital graphics as seen in the movies! Experience firsthand the thrill of guiding your allies in their mission to conquer the enemy in mobile suit warfare. Relive scenes from the TV series or implement your own battle strategies to create whole new story lines.

RATING PENDING
RP
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

© SOTSU AGENCY • SUNRISE. TM & © Cartoon Network. Program © 2000 Bandai Co., Ltd. Distributed by Bandai America Incorporated, 5551 Katella Avenue, Cypress, California 90630. All Rights Reserved. Used under license by Bandai America, Incorporated.

Licensed for play on the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment systems with the NTSC U/C designation only. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Manufactured and printed in the U.S.A. THIS SOFTWARE IS COMPATIBLE WITH PLAYSTATION 2 CONSOLES WITH THE NTSC U/C DESIGNATION. U.S. AND FOREIGN PATENTS PENDING.

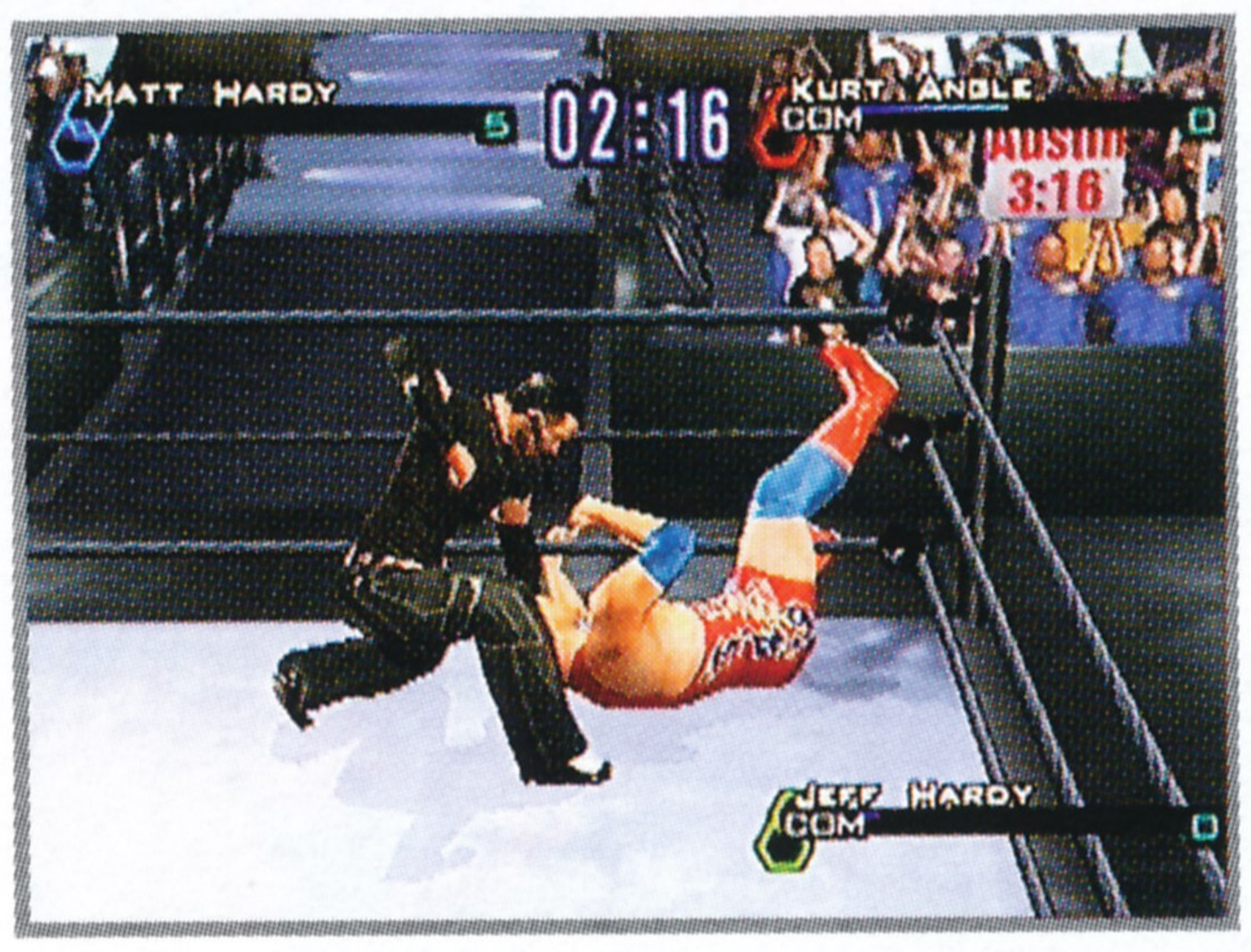
BANDAI®

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM ガンダム

WWF: Just Bring It!

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** THQ • **Release Date:** Winter • **Stage:** 75%

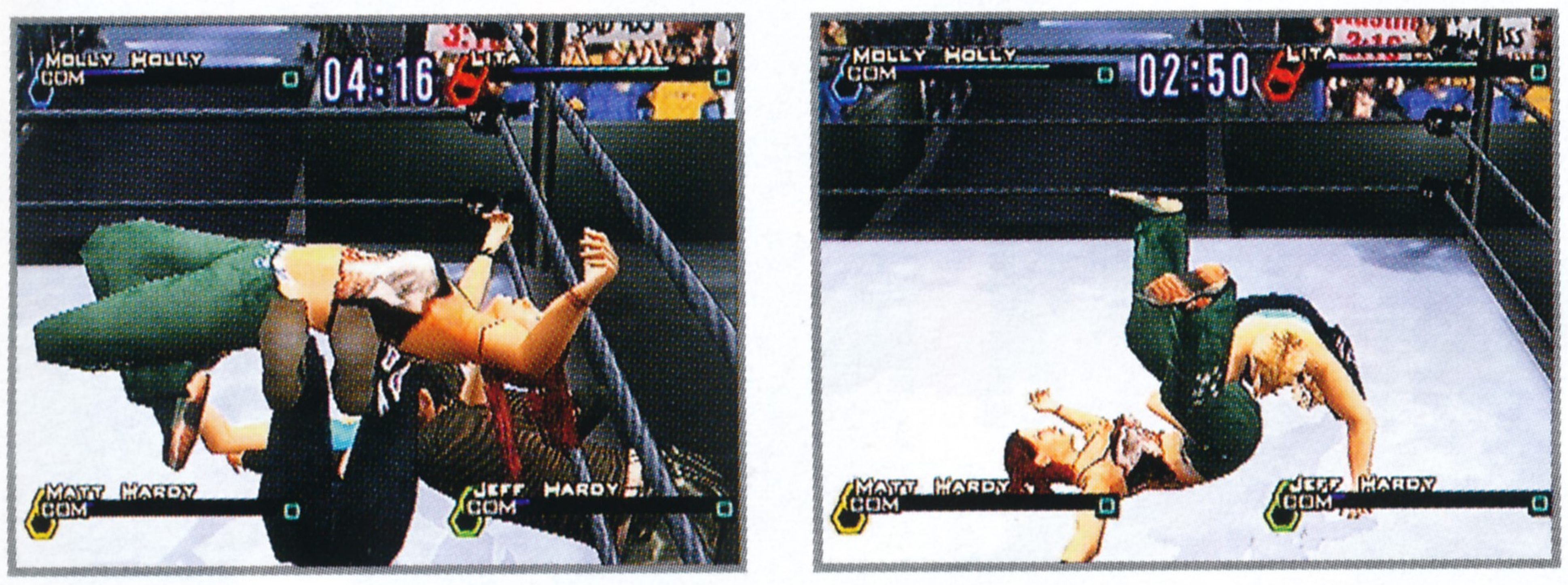
Let the bodies hit the floor! THQ is opening the door for wrestling on PS2



• Kurt Angle is getting his ass kicked! It's true! It's true!

The public's appetite for WWF-based games is insatiable. This has become even more apparent since THQ has taken over the WWF license, put Jakks at the helm and blew away everything Americans have come to accept in wrestling videogames.

WWF Smackdown!: Just Bring It will feature 30 WWF entertainers (unfortunately, due to the typical legal mumbo jumbo and lawyer stuff, the WCW/ECW invasion won't be featured). If anything can make 30 WWF superstars pale in comparison, it's the 70 different matches you can put them into: Everything from a Royal Rumble with nine wrestlers in the ring at once to the hardcore Table/Ladder/Chairs matches.



•(Left) Come on, wouldn't YOU reach in to get a little of this action too?(Right) We've all thought about having Lita is this position.

The television-emulating presentation begins with the Titantron introductions of each wrestler before a match, follows through with play-by-play and color by Michael Cole and Tazz and culminates with multiple camera angles and picture-in-picture views from the first fist to the face to the final Smackdown! As matches move from inside the squared circle into the crowd itself, the camera pulls back to make sure every wrestler is included in frame.

The move list for each wrestler has also been expanded and now each wrestler's finishing moves have been tweaked to include double team and triple team moves for the tag-team matches (D'von, get the table!).

The story mode has really improved over the first two Smackdown! titles on PSX. If you decide to take a few cheap shots at the ref during your match, be ready for some consequences. Next time you attempt to pin your adversary, you are sure to find him counting a little slower. You can also form and break alliances with other wrestlers and,with such a wide variety of different events and wrestlers to choose from, it never makes it feel too scripted. (Is scripted a bad phrase to use when talking about wrestling?)

THQ has done an amazing job of not only providing ground-breaking gameplay and presentation improvements with each new WWF title but they also manage to keep us satisfied by releasing a new title every 9 to 12 months.

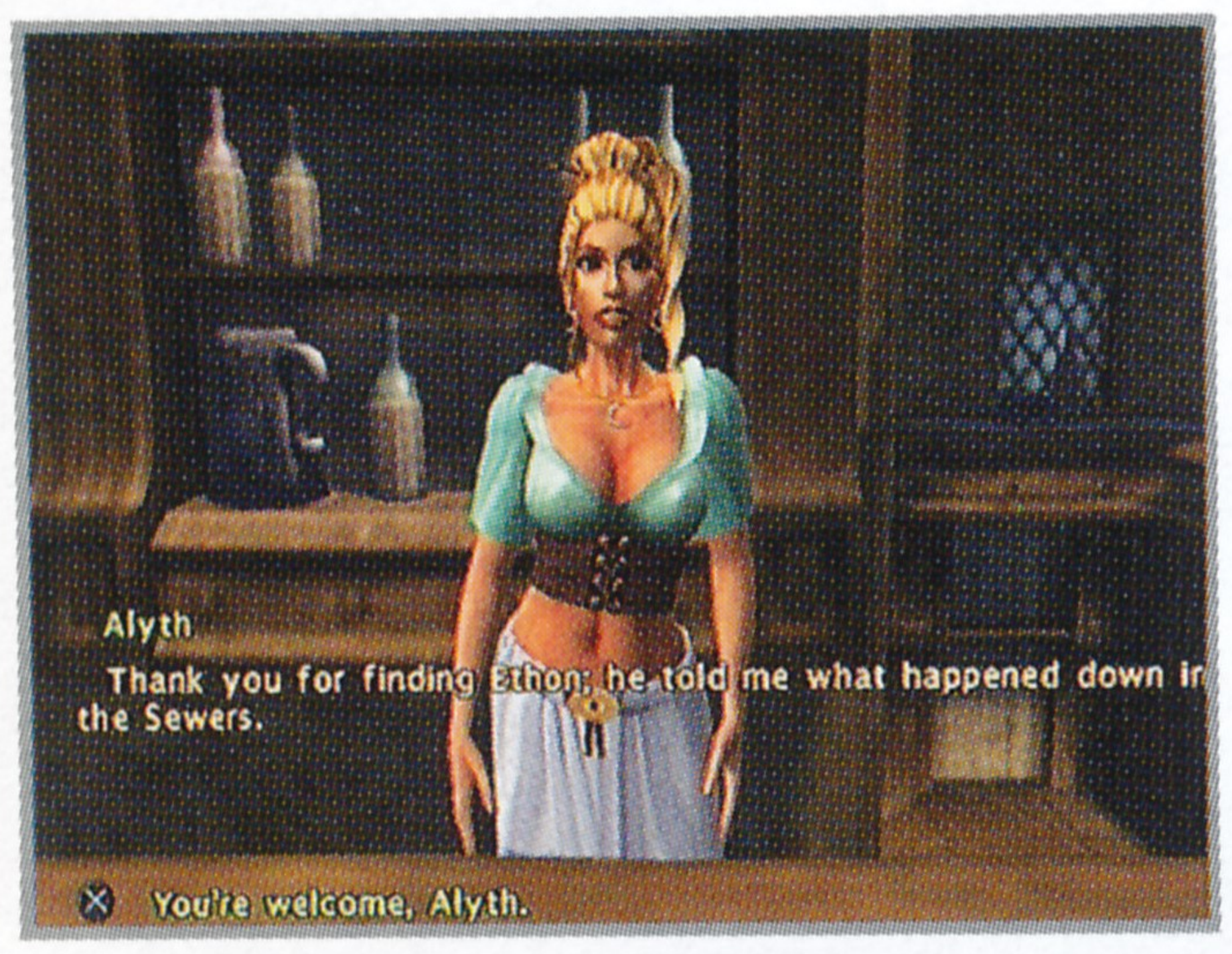
Baldur's Gate: DA

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** Interplay • **Release Date:** Q4 • **Stage:** 90%

Forget the 30-sided dice and pewter figurines; PS2 owners can get their D&D fix right here

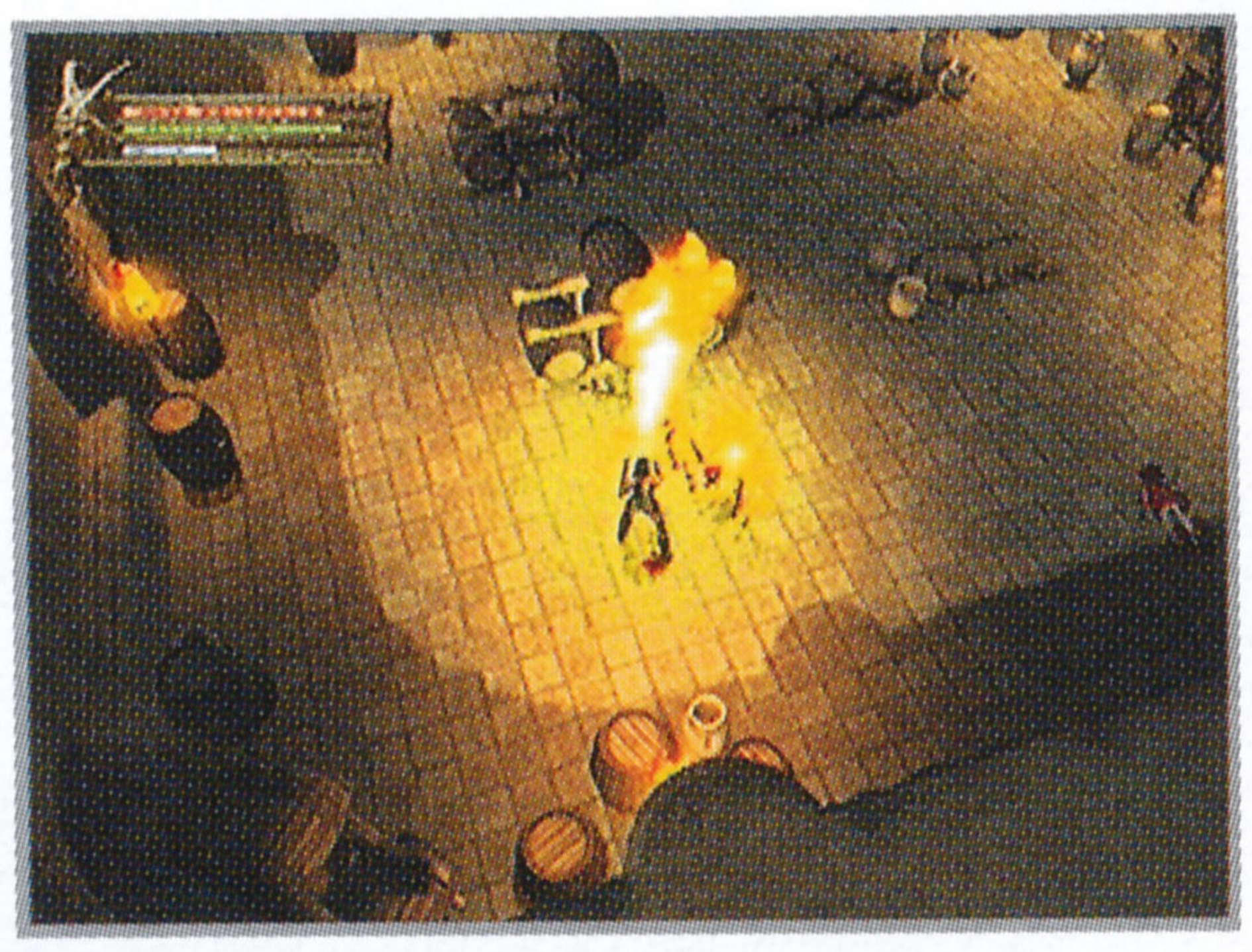
We're all D&D heads, so when we heard Baldur's Gate was coming to PS2, we stopped rummaging through the •**SM** Bag of Infinite Holding (we had forgotten what we were looking for anyway) and snagged ourselves a preview copy. We had heard that Dark Alliance wasn't just a mere PC port, and were very curious to see what developer Snowblind had up their leather armor.

We're also fans of Diablo, so when the dungeon crawling began, we found ourselves totally submerged in the game's 3D world. It's important to note, however, that Diablo only represents BG:DA's roots, as this game already appears leagues ahead of any other action/RPG currently available for console. The visual quality is unmatched in this genre. Each and every monster is composed of at least 3,000 polygons and NPCs can have up to 20,000 polys. What this means is that all characters look and animate in an amazingly realistic fashion. Above that, NPCs feature life-like lip-syncing that is perfectly timed with convincing voiceovers. Other graphical feats include the most realistic water ripple effect we've ever seen and some truly captivating spell effects punctuated by intense lighting and sound.



Alyth
Thank you for finding Ethon; he told me what happened down in the Sewers.

Ⓧ You're welcome, Alyth.



•(Left) Could I get a double shot of your breast..err..best whiskey? And a large order of Buffalo wings...What? I'm sorry. I thought this was Ye Olde Hooters!

The story begins as your character (you can choose from an archer, a dwarf and an elven sorceress) moseys into Baldur's Gate in search of fortune. You are promptly robbed by thugs, and afterwards you take refuge in a local tavern. There you meet Alyth, a gorgeous blonde bartender who has singlehandedly torn the •**SM** office asunder. More than a few Dragon Warrior Slime throwing duels have broken out over whether or not she is the hottest game chick ever. You accept a quick mission from her, and after completing it you acquire a key that will allow access to the crypts where your attackers reside. Soon you learn of a dark power at work beneath the city, and of a mysterious magical orb that is being used to raise the dead. So begins a slew of related quests, totaling more than 50 levels across three acts.

A unique EXP earning system and a control setup that can be learned and used effectively in about five minutes are highlights. Also, classic D&D enemies make appearances, making Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance an answered prayer for fans of the pen and paper series. Now, back to our Bag of Holding. What were we looking for?

Dynasty Warriors 3

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** Koei • **Release Date:** Fall • **Stage:** 80%

During the Three Kingdoms era, parents blamed violence on kids playing rock/paper/scissors

MORALE
20
K.O.COUNT

• **Explosive diarrhea is never pleasant but it can be extremely distracting in the heat of battle**

Somehow, somewhere, somebody is going to take the lowest common denominator approach and call Dynasty Warriors 3 a "beat em' up." Well, let's forget they are missing the depth, story and range of DW3. If, broken down to its base elements, DW3 is a "beat em' up," the companies who have been trying to create one on a next millennium system should take note. This is how it can, and should, be done.

If you somehow must explain to a fellow gameplayer the reason DW3 is much more than a beat em' up, try pointing out these nuances: Does the typical beat em' up (we'll call them BEUs from here on out) have 41 different playable characters? Do each of the characters have unique and interwoven back stories? Do most BEUs feature 23 different stages, multiple objectives, and levels that allow dozens and dozens of enemies on screen at once without even a hint of slowdown?

MORALE
23
K.O.COUNT
MORALE
23
K.O.COUNT

• **We never could keep the rules of Cricket straight. Which one of these guys is the bowler and who do I hit with my wicket?**

Sure, Dynasty Warriors 3 does have a two player co-op mode, an essential for a good BEU, but the way that DW3 splits the screen to allow players to address different "hot spots" that require the player's attention at the same time is certainly innovative. (Name one BEU, for that matter, that even has "hot spots" to address!) The two player split screen also allows for players to combine their special attacks (called MUSOU attacks) to create unparalleled destruction.

If this stack of reasons isn't enough to convince them that DW3 is more than "just a beat 'em up," make sure you point out the variety of enemies you face including the Elephant Calvary…as a matter of fact, jump astride one of the elephants and ride it into battle. Show them the new weapons and armor you can secure during each level, use the newly enabled Evasion Tactics or simply show them how you can give commands to your bodyguards.

If all of these features can somehow not convince them of the true depth of Dynasty Warriors 3, do not try to apprehend the subject, just send them (postage paid) to the •**SM** offices. We have Liu Bei with a freshly sharpened blade that would love to show them the error of their ways in the two-player versus mode.

The Legend Of Alon D'ar

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** Ubi Soft • **Release Date:** Fall • **Stage:** 80%

RPG rule #246: No one will believe you when you explain how the bad guy is deceiving everyone

Electronic Entertainment Expos (E3s), especially around a system launch, can be deceiving. It is not unheard of to see a half-dozen or so new games showing off the power of a soon to be launched system only to have the games disappear off the radar right after E3 closes. The Legend Of Alon D'ar seemed to be one of those titles.

After seeing it two years ago at the 2000 E3, we heard nothing about this title until this year's 2001 E3, when Ubi Soft's darling PR expert Melanie Hodgson amazed us with the progress this title has made in its more than a year underground.

The Legend of Alon D'ar is a mixture of both U.S. styled and Japanese styled Role Playing Games. The world of Alon D'ar is a seamless world; once the initial loading of the game is finished, you never have to endure another load screen for the rest of the game. You can enter dungeons and towns without a single second of loading and even combat does not require a pause. The only exception to this rule is if you use the teleportation areas, which quickly move you from one continent to another.

Another aspect that carries the U.S. flow is the two player option. Once you reach a certain point in your quest (about an hour in), a second character joins your party. It is at this time that a friend can pick up the second controller and direct the action of that character.

Karolec

Hello again, my brave warrior. My husband is still out of town. Are you sure you have no time to spare?

•**(Left) It was at this point in the game that the cheesy 70's disco/jazz music started playing and the main character revealed why they call him "The Legend"**

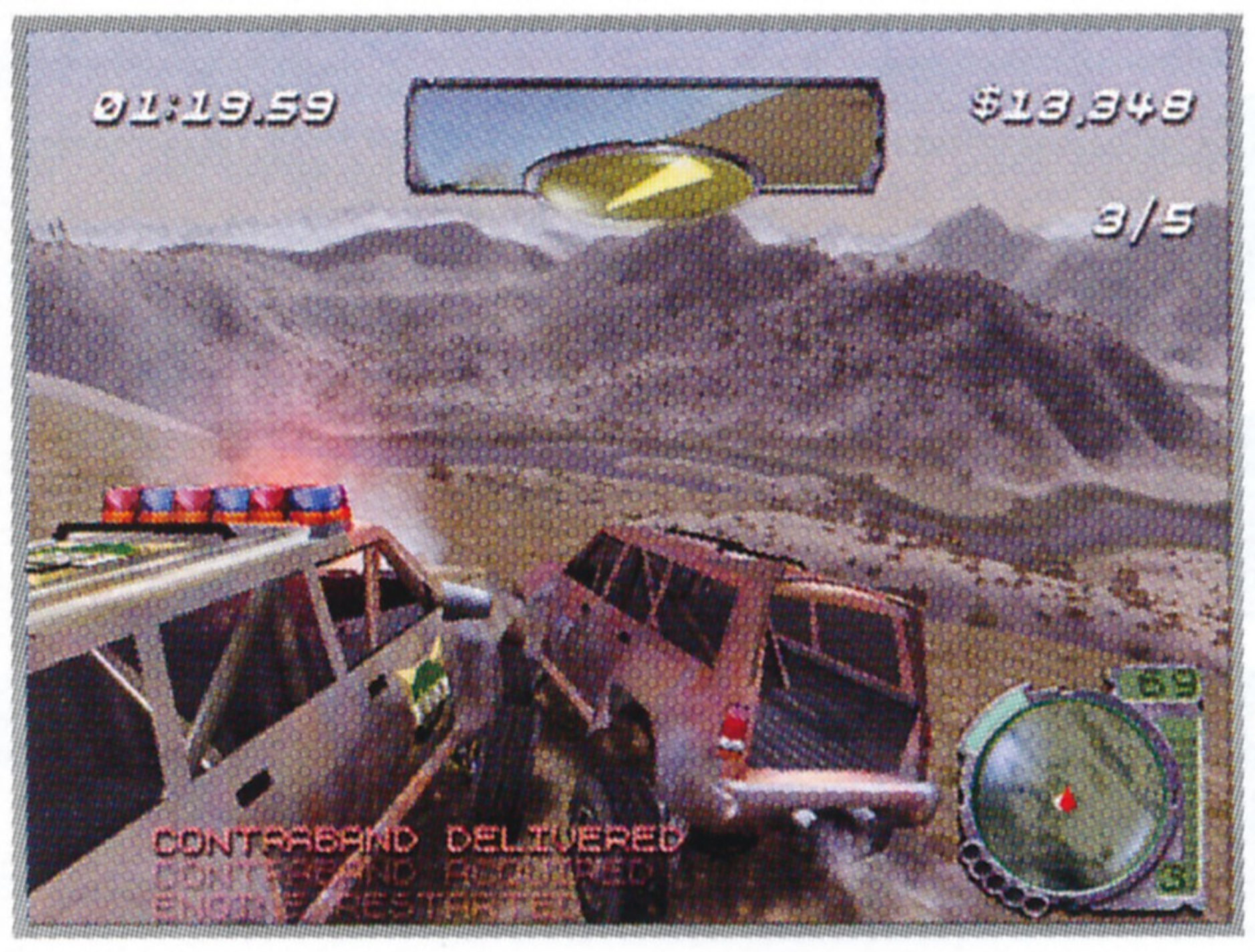
Since the combat is executed using a variation of the traditional Japanese turn-based system, it is not essential for a second player to join in but the action is enthralling enough that when a second player is added, it never feels as though they are not contributing. As more players are added to the party, the first and second player split control of the new members. When you combine more characters and faster attacking weapons (as you both power up the speed at which you attack and acquire better armaments), things move very quickly.

The ability to focus on what combat abilities you wish to raise helps players to really personalize the characters. While one player may choose to train long and hard in the mastery of swords, another may focus on becoming an expert with a war hammer. The options are almost endless with a daunting number of weapons to choose from and each weapon will vary in effectiveness against the many different enemies you will encounter.

Smuggler's Run 2

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** Rockstar • **Release Date:** Q4 • **Stage:** 80%

Pedal meets metal. Dunebuggy meets Boarder Patrol. Smuggler meets his new cellmate, Tiny.



•Pedro vowed to wring that little chihuahua's neck for suggesting he make a run for the border

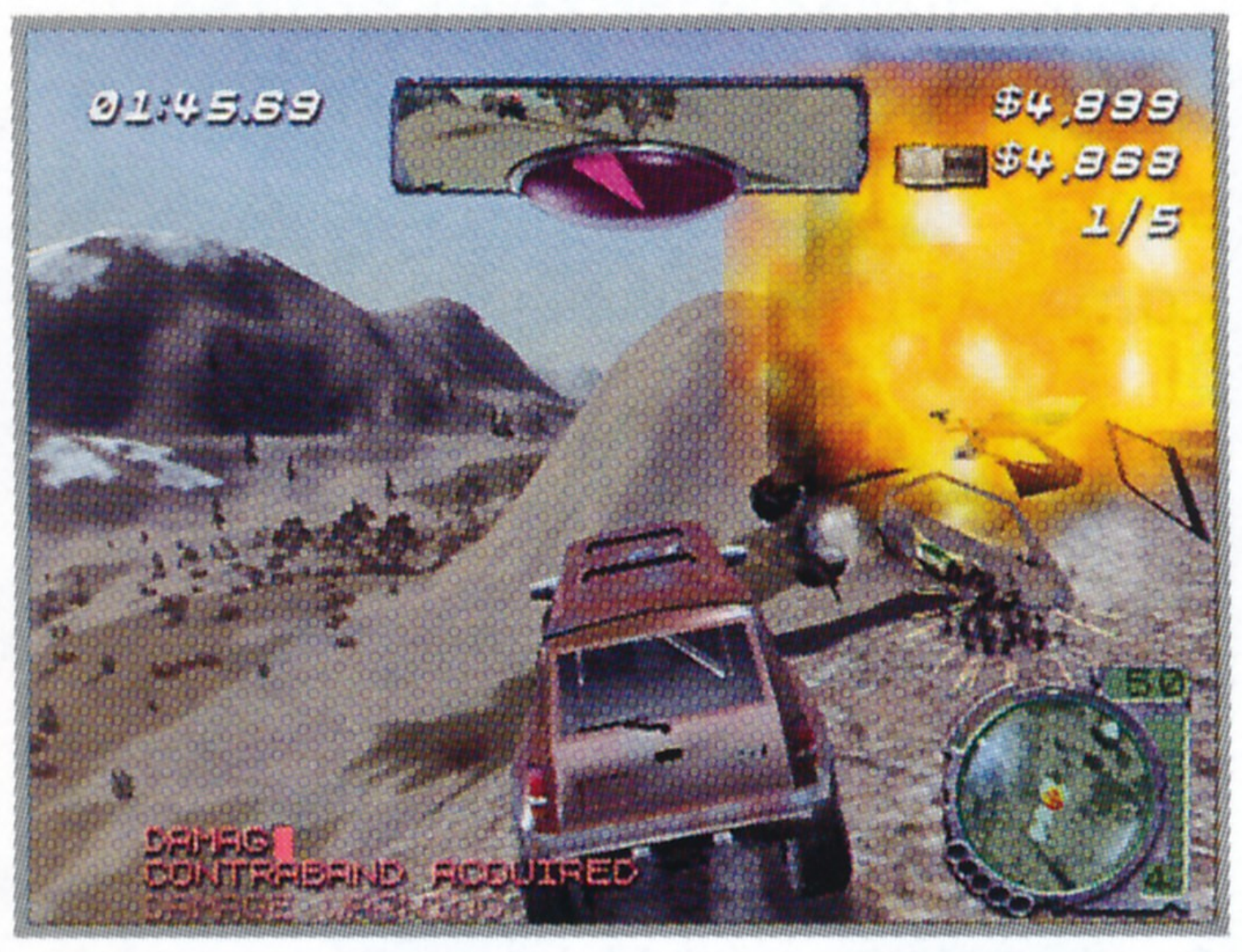
Now here is a scenario that we all have mulled over in our minds the last few weeks: Driving through Afghanistan (one of the new areas found in Smuggler's Run 2) fully equipped with offensive countermeasures such as smoke screens, exploding kegs and oil slicks, cutting through minefields and avoiding crossfire while smuggling goods under the nose of the ruling government.

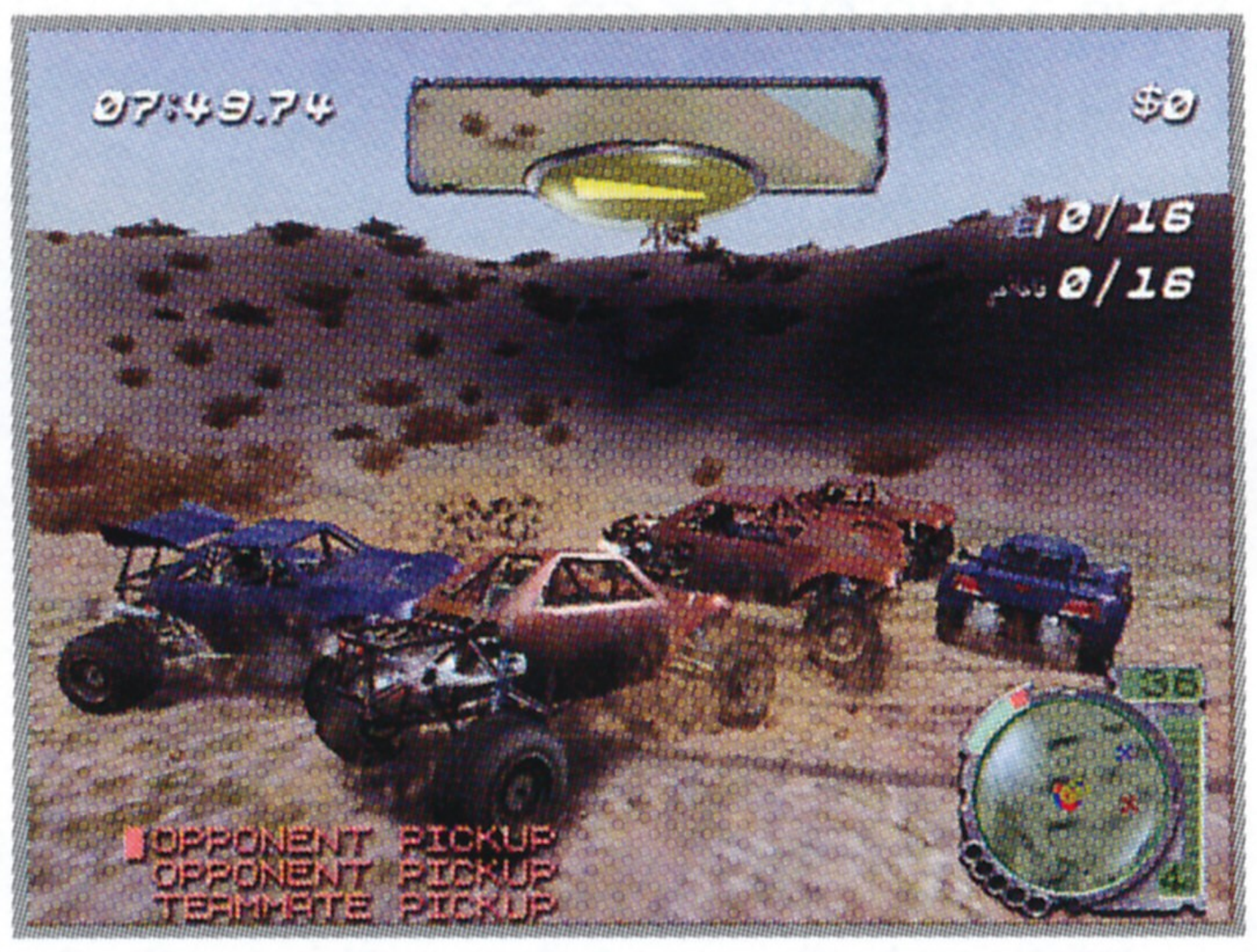
All irony aside, Rockstar is taking its covert operations worldwide in Smuggler's Run 2 with new areas such as the aforementioned Afghanistan and the rice paddies of Vietnam. They are also expanding the depth of the missions with new challenges like helicopter and plane drops and follow the leader stealth chases. If all of this espionage makes you a little nervous, don't worry, the new rear-view mirror lets you keep an eye on your six with the bonus ability of watching the havoc you leave in your wake.

Also new to SR2 are the night missions that let you slip on some infra-red goggles and chase an opponent down by the heat of his tailpipe. While the concept of smuggling goods is still the same as the first release, some new tangents have been added. Much of the new contraband has some quirks of its own. Fragile merchandise can break, larger freight will affect how fast and how far you can race and some of the more hazardous items have a tendency to explode once their shelf life has been reached.

SR2 also has improved the selection of vehicles at your disposal. Players will be able to unlock the new Hondo, ATV, Baja truck, Massive truck and Military truck. Plus the original Dune Buggy, Rally Car and SUV have been enhanced and redesigned with a smoother, more detailed look.

Most of the missions will still include time limits, one of our pet peeves about the first release. The programmers behind Smugglers Run 2 explained that with a game as open-ended as this title, there has to be some sort of limitation to keep players from mastering the landscape and simply racing forever. Funny, we always thought that was what the ruthless, blood thirsty border patrol was for :)





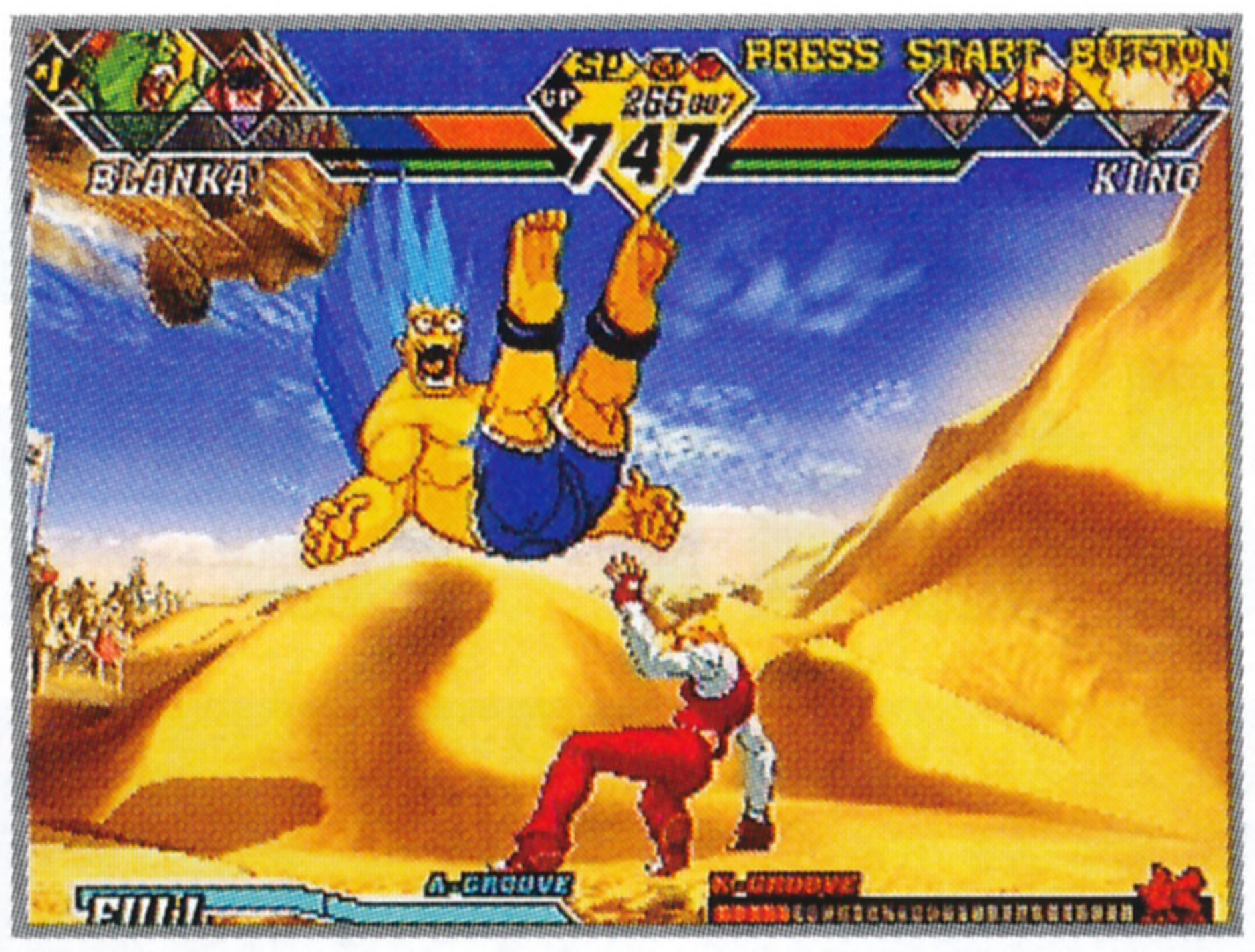
•(Right) It's easy to spot the drivers from Los Angeles; they can manage to snarl traffic even in the middle of the desert

---

Capcom Vs. SNK 2

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** Capcom • **Release Date:** Fall • **Stage:** 90%

Thanks to Capcom, now we all have that "Groove is in the Heart" song stuck on our brains



•Without any grasp of proper physical checkup etiquette, Blanka was taken by surprise when the doc asked him to turn and cough twice

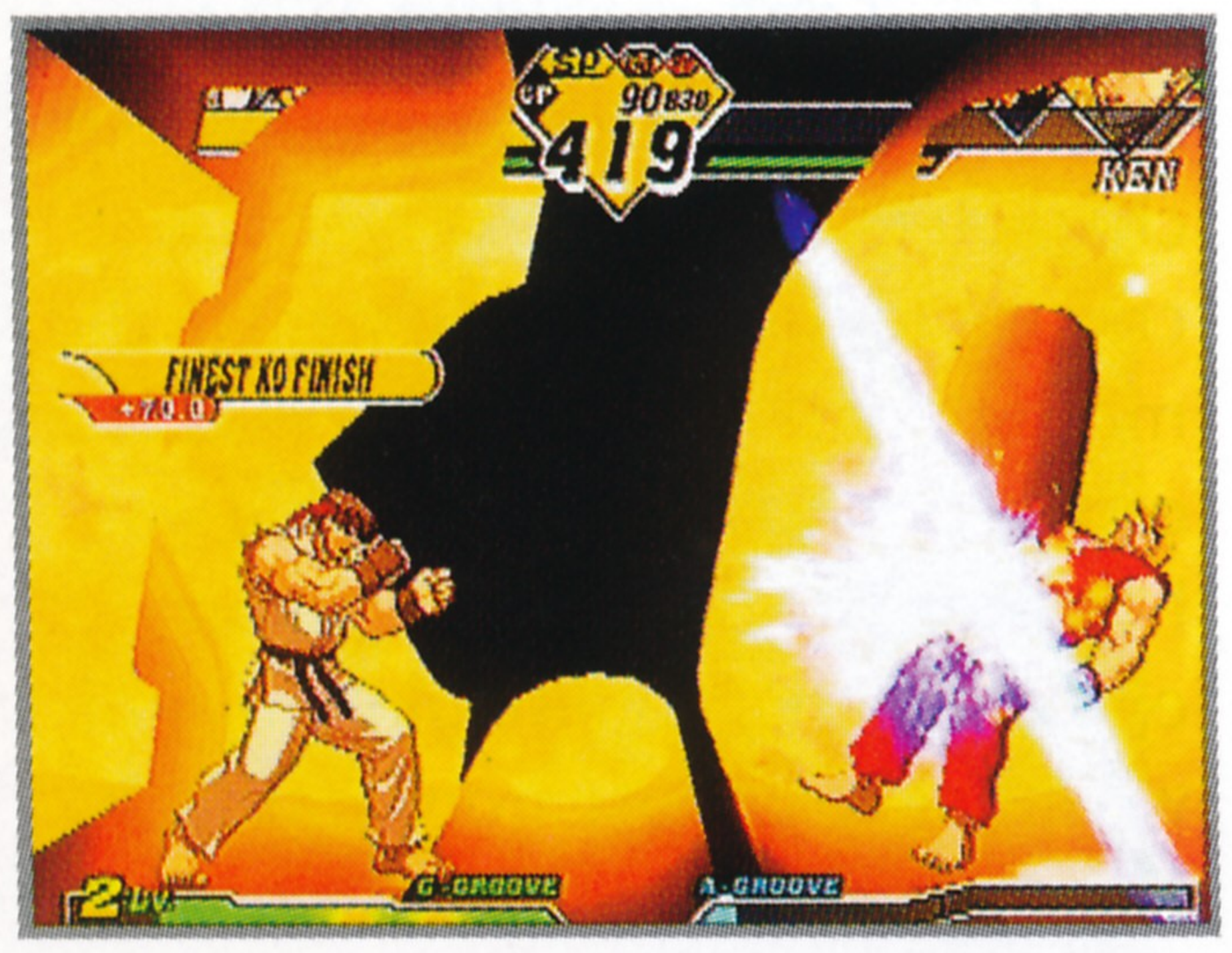
Get ready for one of the most anticipated fighting games ever, as Capcom is set to unleash Capcom Vs. SNK 2. This edition retains the classic 2D look while adding new backdrops and eye-damaging special effects. Of course, that's not all you want to hear. You want the lowdown on the new gameplay features and what sort of surprises Capcom has up its sleeve, right?

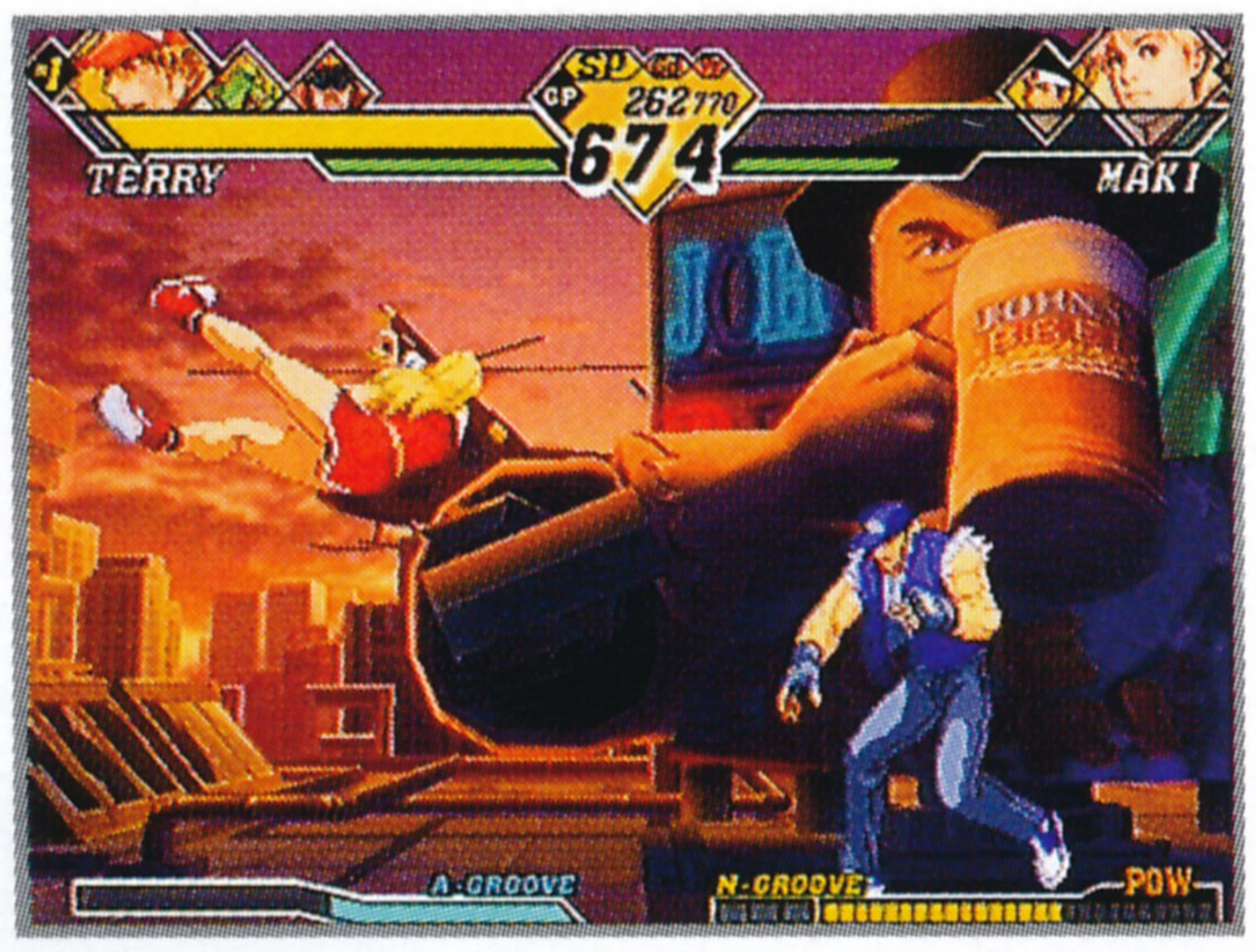
CVSNK 2 will introduce (well, reintroduce) at least 10 characters previously not seen in this series. These include Street Fighter's Dan, SNK's Joe Higashi, and Haomaru from Samurai Spirits. Others have yet to be revealed, but if you're into the super combo-heavy action of these fighting classics, you won't want to miss this.

We know most fighting gamers aren't too concerned with storylines, but for the record the story centers around two rival corporations engaged in urban war. A fighting tournament is being held to end all disputes. Each corporation's combatants are aligned with one of three fighting "grooves." Since there are three grooves for each corporation, you can customize your fighting style. The Capcom characters' first groove is similar to the one found in the original, and allows you to use Level 1-3 Super Combos, air blocks and counters. Capcom's second groove is limited to Level 1 combos but allows you to dodge and counterattack easier. In the third groove, Capcom fighters must utilize a short-range attack style but have access to Level 3 Super Combos.

On the SNK side, grooves are related to characters' damage percentage by cause or effect. The first groove, like Capcom's, is also similar to that found in the original. When your health dips below 15%, you can use Level 1 Super Combos without limit, and Level 3 Super Combos when the gauge is full. In the second SNK groove, you increase attacking power by performing Power Max moves. The third groove is particularly effective, as it increases attack power by 35% and decreases damage taken by 1/8, provided you have filled your combo gauge.

With a roster of 44 fighters, each sporting new combat gear, there should be plenty of flavor in this new recipe.





•(Left) Just when Ken thought he had won, two members of the Letter People Tribe showed up and ruined everything

Grand Theft Auto 3

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** Rockstar • **Release Date:** Fall • **Stage:** 80%

Everyone wanting to take a cheap shot at videogame violence, please form a single file line

After playing and watching Grand Theft Auto 3, we were left with the impression that we were watching a big budget Hollywood movie coming together. If GTA3 was a television show, it would be getting Emmy nominations instead of the wrath of overly conservative, finger pointing government officials.

Rockstar has assembled an all-star cast of Hollywood actors to provide the voices to each of the characters within the game. As the plot unfolds, instantly recognizable mainstays of the "Pasta Pack" (the core group of actors who gravitate around the latest batch of Mafia movies/shows) help to create the feeling you are a cog in the giant underground organization, working your way up to achieve your ultimate goal…revenge.

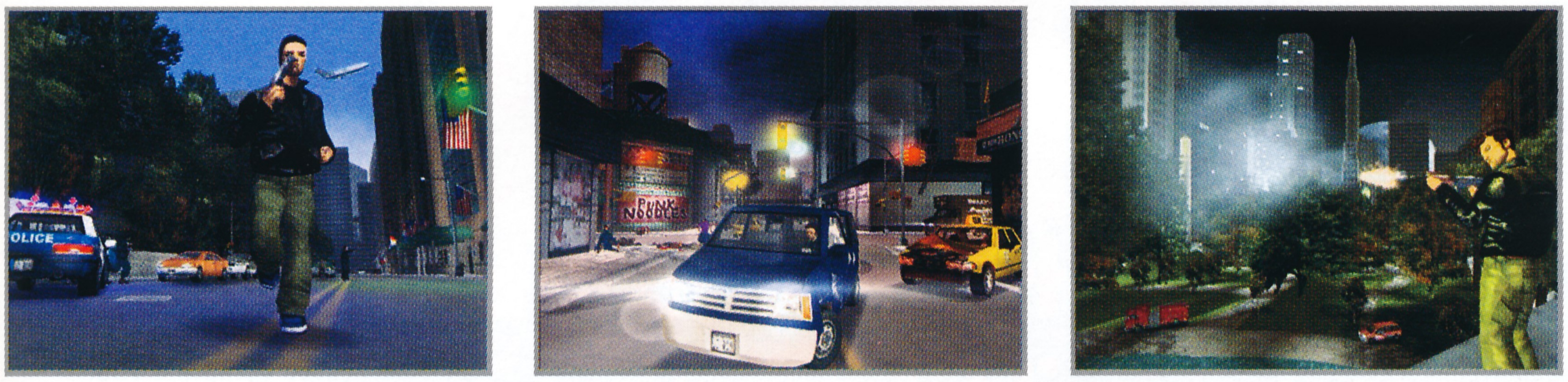
Gamers familiar with the earlier GTA releases are sure to be pleasantly shocked by the progression of the series into 3D. GTA3 does still offer the "traditional" Grand Theft Auto view, but you will want to use the 3rd person perspective that is now available. This is where the sheer amount of detail in GTA3 is most apparent.

While the main story is always at work, you can take some time off from becoming a made man and jack different cars and engage in a series of mini-games. Snag a cab and you can play something similar to Crazy Taxi by picking up fares and delivering them to their destination...and even earn money doing it. Pick a police car and go into vigilante mode to track down fugitives running from the long arm of the law (present company excluded, of course).

GTA3 is also filled with its share of humor, taking pokes at movies, TV shows and even other games with not-so-subtle references to titles like Driver and The Getaway. This only adds to its cinematic aura, giving it a dark comedic feel.

Sadly, their is one question everyone will probably be asking: Is GTA3 violent? The answer is yes, but so are television shows like The Sopranos, movies like Pulp Fiction and driving through East St. Louis after dark. The question everyone should be asking is: Is GTA3 entertaining? The answer is thoroughly and totally.

Grand Theft Auto 3 is the premium cable network of the videogame world. It's quality entertainment for an older crowd. If you don't like what you see, just change the channel.

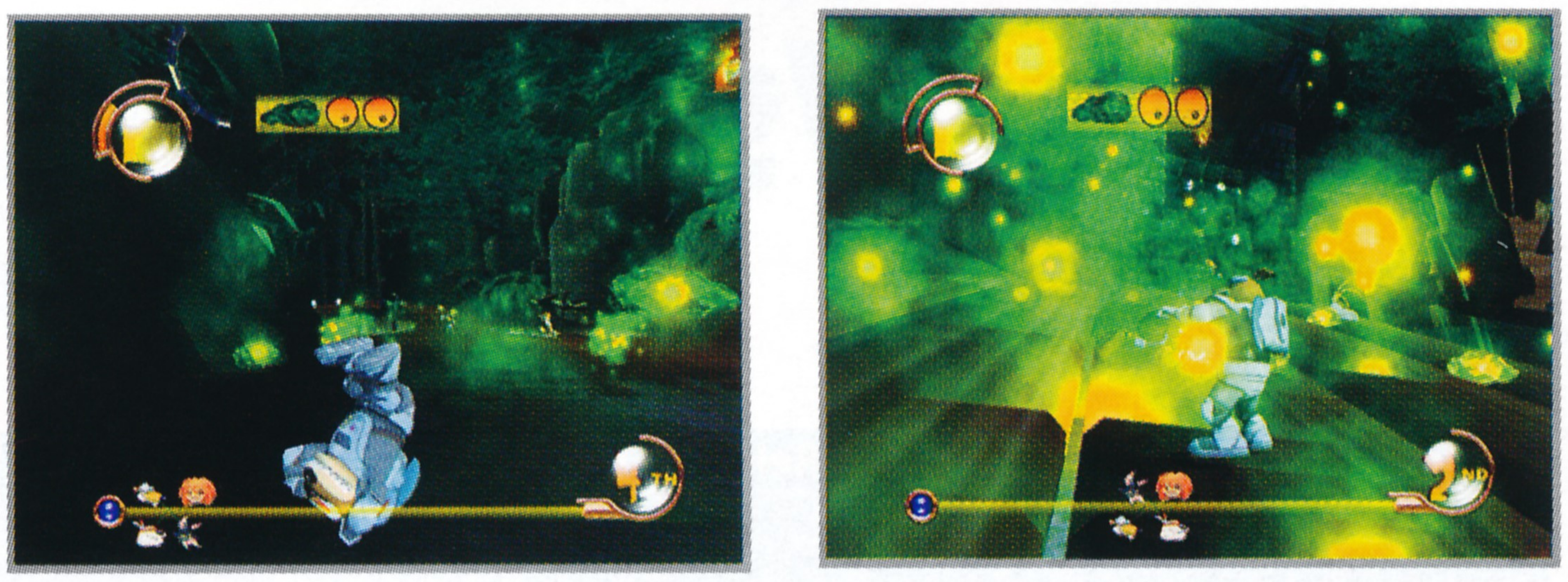


•Are these scenes from a new Hollywood blockbuster? Maybe a new HBO series? Or the latest offering from Rockstar on PS2?

Mad Dash Racing

Platform: Xbox • **Publisher:** Eidos • **Release Date:** Launch • **Stage:** 80%

Like the top brass at Microsoft, this Xbox title features some very ambitious characters

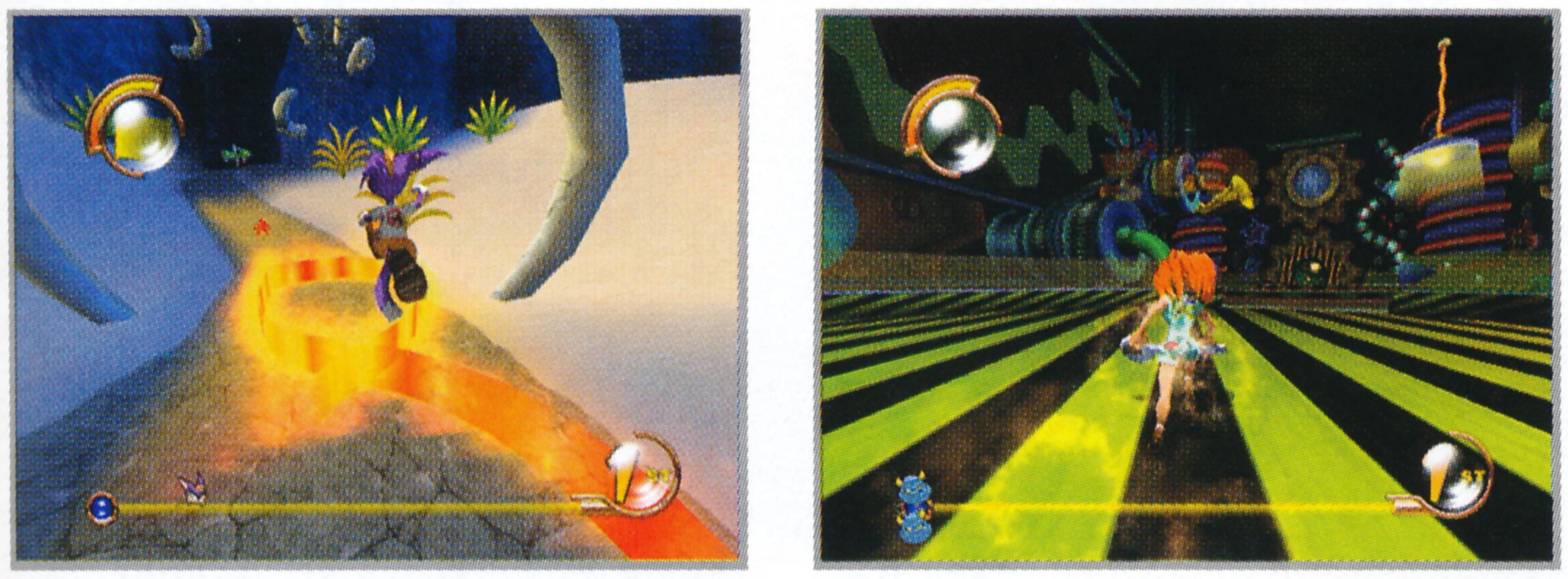


A drill sergeant who was once a prisoner of war that stayed alive by drinking his own urine; a foul-mannered motorhead who can't control his flatulence at the dinner table; an escaped convict, a brain-dead weasel and a shit-kickin' armadillo. These motley characters are just a few of the diverse personalities that will be fighting for the finish line in Mad Dash Racing, Eidos' wacky foot racing title due to hit shelves alongside Xbox.

Developed by Crystal Dynamics, MDR allows for high speed four-player competition across seven giant environments. Eidos has even stated that new courses and characters will be available for download via Xbox's web capability once it's up and running. At the start of a game, each player chooses a character from one of three general ability sets: Dashers, Bashers or Gliders. Depending on the character class chosen, each player will have access to certain alternate routes and hidden powerups throughout the race. Then it's off to the track, where there is only one rule, and it is that there are no rules. Racers will be able to knock each other around using special weapons, traps and explosive devices, plus there will be some unique ways to "trick" opponents. The environments present all manner of obstacles related to each track's particular theme, as well as living beasts like man-eating plants. For the single player, MDR features a story mode that includes two vicious bosses that must be defeated in addition to mastering the seven main levels.

If you're into DJ techno mixes, MDR's bass-heavy soundtrack will rock your senses. With an all-star lineup featuring Fatboy Slim, the Propellerheads, Moby, MDFMK (KMFDM spelled backwards; same band with a female lead vocalist) and others, there's certainly no lack of ear-thumping music to get you going.

Since most of the titles hitting stores in the early part of Xbox's life don't have the "feel" of console gaming, Mad Dash Racing definitely has a chance to stand out. With its blazing fast engine, colorful graphics and outrageous character designs, this could be a leader in the sales race for early Xbox software.



•(Right) Here is an exclusive look at the INSIDE of an Xbox console. Note the little people running around keeping things working at peak performance

Crash: Wrath of Cortex

Platform: Xbox • **Publisher:** PS2 • **Release Date:** November • **Stage:** 80%

What will Cortex do this time? Same thing he does every time, Pinky. Try to take over the world

•This deleted scene on the Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom DVD didn't make it into the movie because could be construed as degrading to marsupials

The tried and true Crash formula is soon to hit PS2. While the zany marsupial won't be getting a significant graphical makeover, he'll certainly have plenty of new vehicles to commandeer and creative settings to explore.

You'd think that being foiled and humiliated by a pesky bandicoot on numerous occasions would have any self-respecting bad guy crawling back home with his tail between his legs. But the sinister Neo Cortex has a new plan; one that cannot fail. Rather than directly taking Crash on, the big N has developed a walking biological weapon whose only goal is to find and destroy Crash Bandicoot. Luckily for Crash, the beast needs the power of four elements to reach maximum power. To stop it, you'll need to locate the elements, all the while fighting and avoiding Cortex's army of wicked followers. Meantime, Cortex will try to take over the world. Narf!

•(Left) How do ya like them apples? (Right) Crash never had a Power Wheels as a kid but he's making up for it now

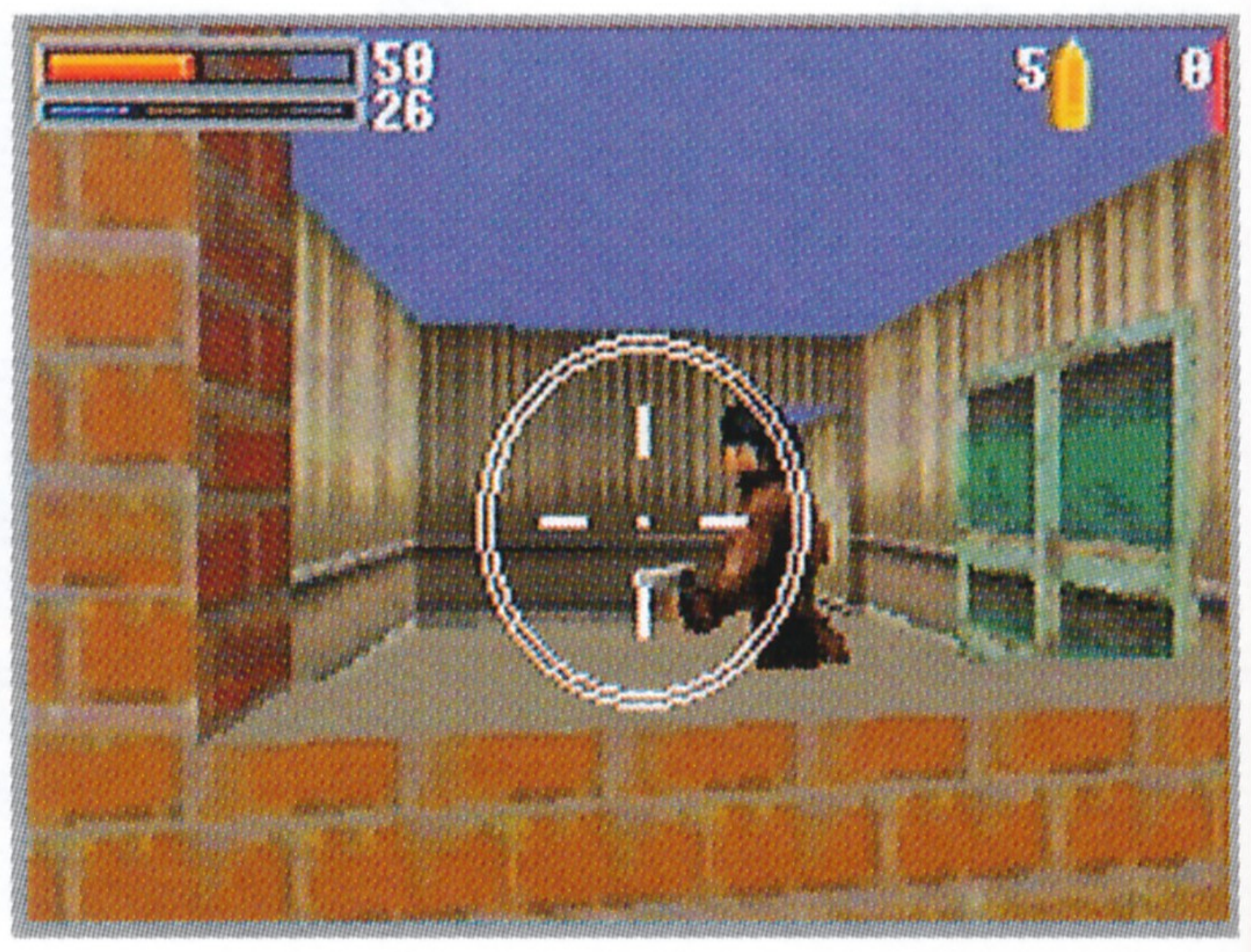
Traveller's Tales, the developer behind this installment (Naughty Dog is courting a new leg called Jak and Daxter), is smart to avoid rearranging the series' easy-access playability. Wrath of Cortex's heart is pure 3D platforming action, with the same basic maneuvers available to the player. That means you'll be jumping, crawling, bellyflopping and spin attacking to your heart's content. Of course, the biggest draw in the last two Crash games was the ability to hop in a number of vehicles to get around and fight the bad guys with. In this regard, Traveller's Tales has pulled out all the stops. You can expect airplane acrobatics, subterranean travels, jeep offroading and even mech warfare. On top of that, Coco, now playable as a second character, gets to pilot a starfighter and take to the slopes on a snowboard.

The general flow of the game is also similar to earlier versions. You'll start out in a central hub, whereby you can access five uniquely themed worlds. Each world consists of several stages and is unlocked by completing the preceding world. And as always, you'll need to be on the lookout for crystals, gems and relics in your quest to complete your collection. Luckily, you can play stages over again if you happen to miss these secret-hiding items.

Ecks Vs. Sever

Platform: GBA • **Publisher:** bam! • **Release Date:** November • **Stage:** 80%

More than just another FPS, this title features Dennis Eckersly trying to kill Tom Seaver ;P



As if the government or its agents ever conspired to do anything unrighteous or cover something up! As unbelievable as it may seem, Ecks Vs. Sever is a First-Person Shooter for Game Boy Advance that centers around this ridiculous concept.

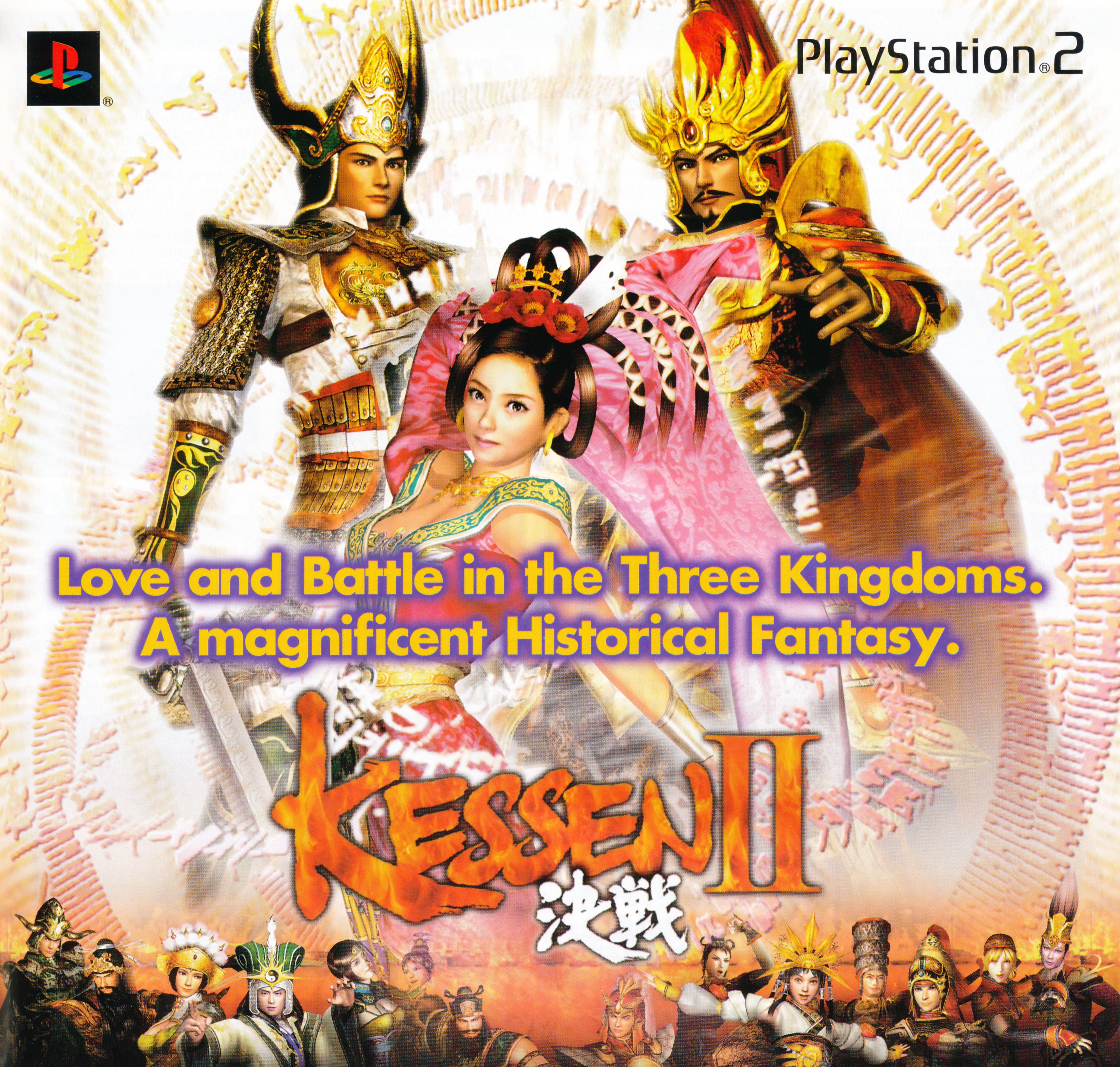
At the start of a game, you'll choose to play as either Jonathan Ecks or the rogue Sever. Both are involved in something sinister, and it's up to you to determine the outcome. In either case, the story is presented in a very unique fashion. Tidbits of information are dealt out through transcripts of government hearings and tribunals between each level of play. These transcripts actually become knowledge four weeks in the future, while gameplay takes place in the present. The idea is that you'll read part of a transcript and then live out the relevant action.

•Little Johnny was the envy of the neighborhood with his Cap Grenades and giant Super Soaker with scope attachment

As you'll soon learn, Ecks has lost his family in an attack that was meant to kill him. His formidable schooling and experience has landed him a job on the Elite Forensic Psychology team, but one day he receives a call to duty from the Assistant Director of the FBI. As it turns out, there's some unofficial dirty work to be done, and in return for finishing the job Ecks just may learn the whereabouts of his family. Unfortunately, the Assistant Director gets whacked. Meanwhile Sever, a deep cover operative for the National Security Agency, has seemingly gone berserk. She has been picking off government agents, and Ecks learns that if he can chase her down he may still have a chance to discover the truth.

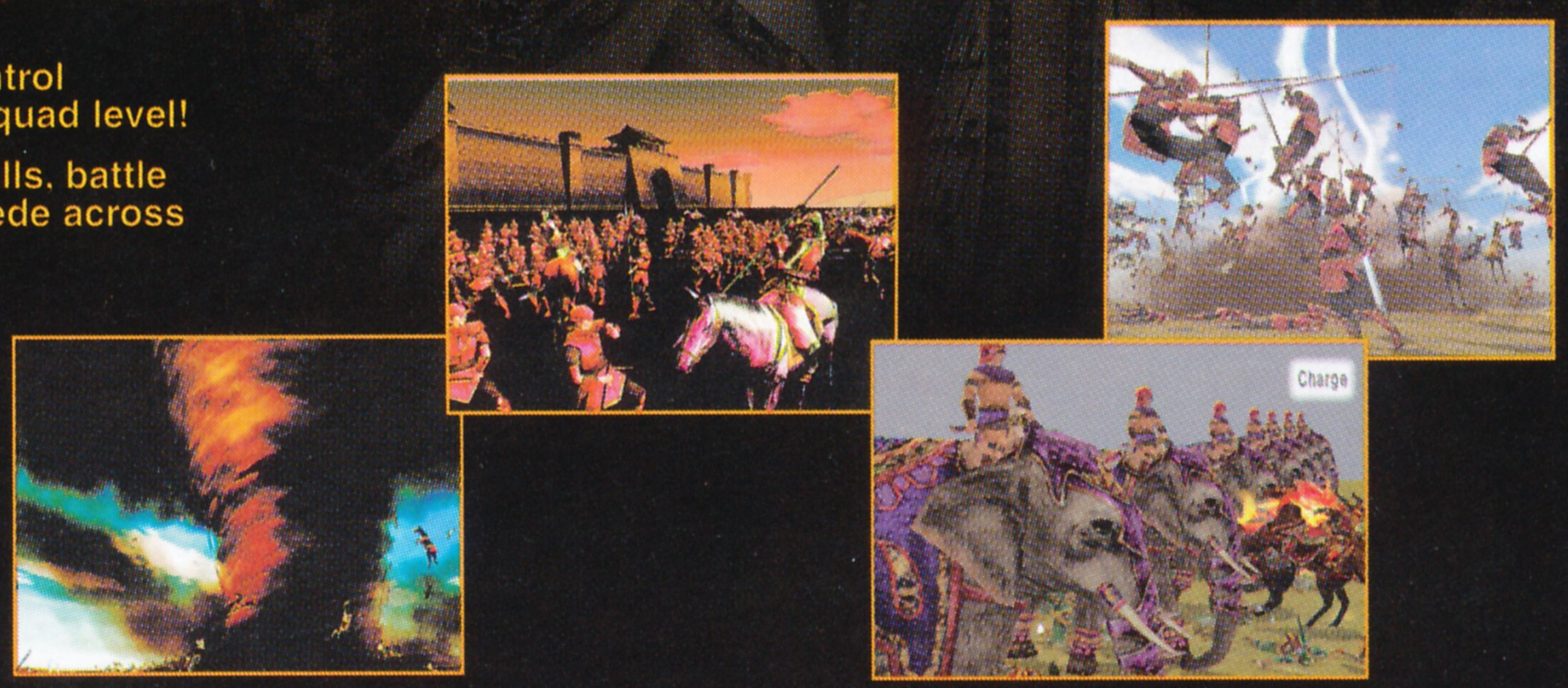
The story will change depending upon the character that you choose. Either way, you'll have some destructive weapons at your disposal including a handgun, shotgun, sniper rifle (complete with full zooming capabilities), uzi, grenades and more. The full 3D environments have you trading lead and shrapnel in city streets and seedy bars, across rooftops, and even inside the "impenetrable" NSA Headquarters.

With over 12 missions per character, Ecks Vs. Sever promises plenty of single player action. If that's not enough, bam! is including two player deathmatches via link cable.


PlayStation 2
Love and Battle in the Three Kingdoms.
A magnificent Historical Fantasy.
KESSEN II
決戦

MORE DYNAMIC BATTLES, MORE DRAMATIC ACTION

- New "Agent Technology" allows for 500 soldiers on screen - 5x more than the original!
- Devastating new Elemental Attacks including tornadoes, lightening strikes, and meteor showers!
- New weapons, tactics, and troops including Elephant Cavalry!
- Experience battles firsthand - control generals and give orders at the squad level!
- 30 new stages! Besiege castle walls, battle aboard moving ships, and stampede across open plains!



RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Visit www.esrb.org
or call 1-800-771-3772
for more info.

KOEI

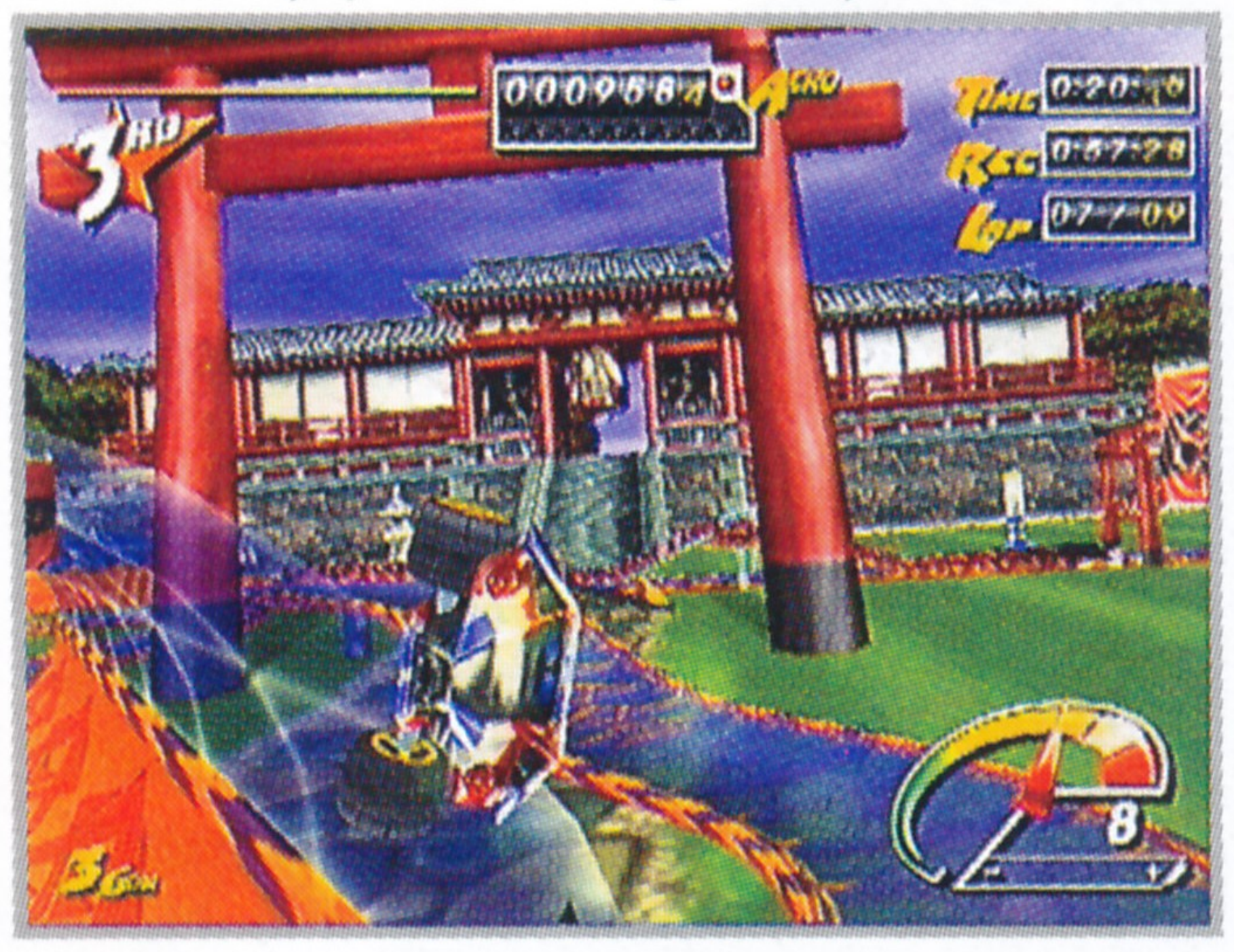
Kessen II is a trademark of KOEI Corporation and KOEI Co., Ltd. © 2001 KOEI Corporation. All rights reserved. "PlayStation"and the "PS" Family logo

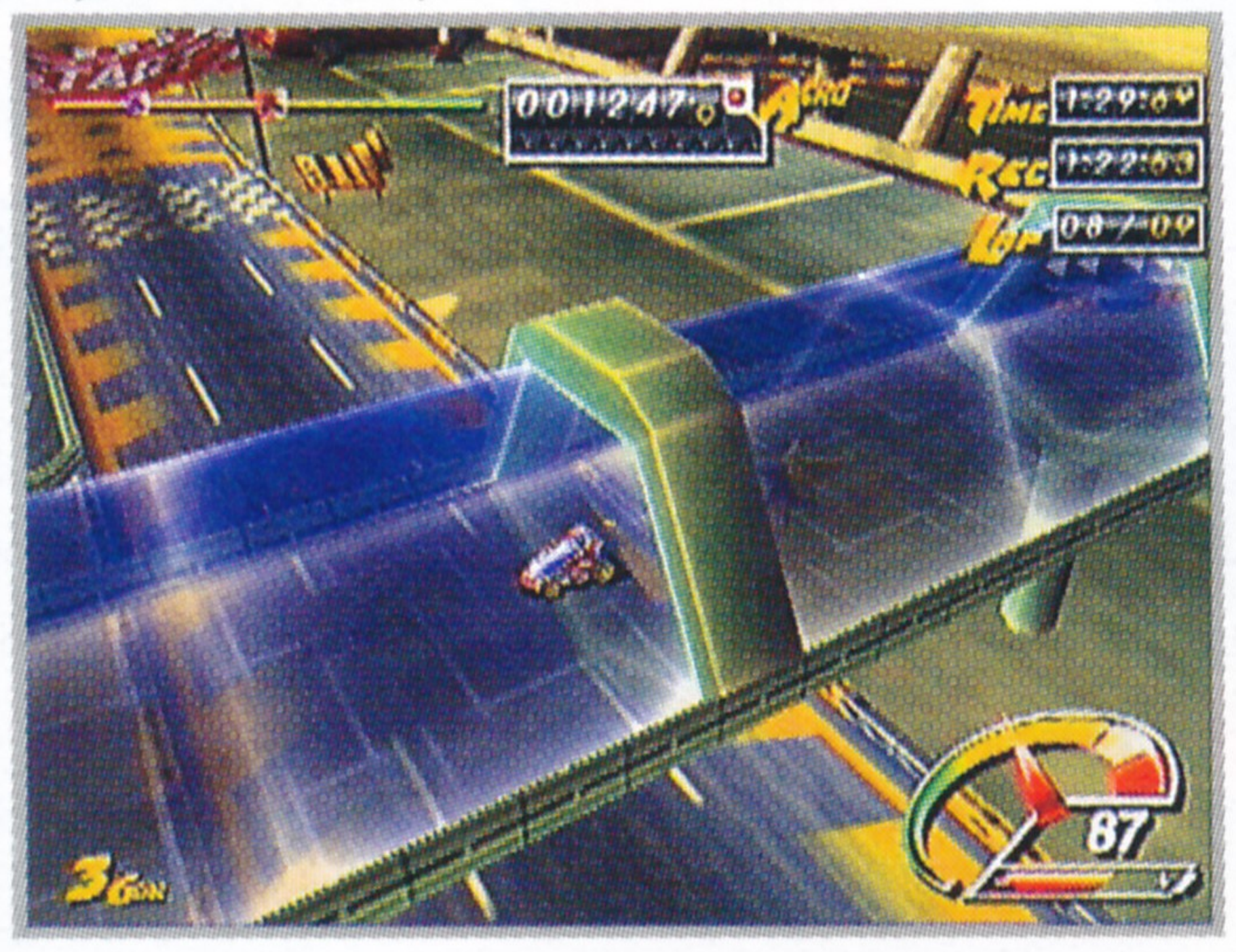
Stunt GP

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** Titus • **Release Date:** Fall • **Stage:** 90%

There is something inherently irresistible to the male of the human species when it comes to small, remote-controlled cars. We meticulously put them together only to send them flying through the air off the closest ramp-shaped object and, inevitably, smashing them into little bitty pieces as gravity returns them to the ground.

Stunt GP is the less expensive option to this ritual, letting PS2 owners build and race the little beasts in a virtual setting. Take the world tour and race on insane tracks and test your trick abilities by putting your RC car in a Tony Hawk-styled freestyle course.

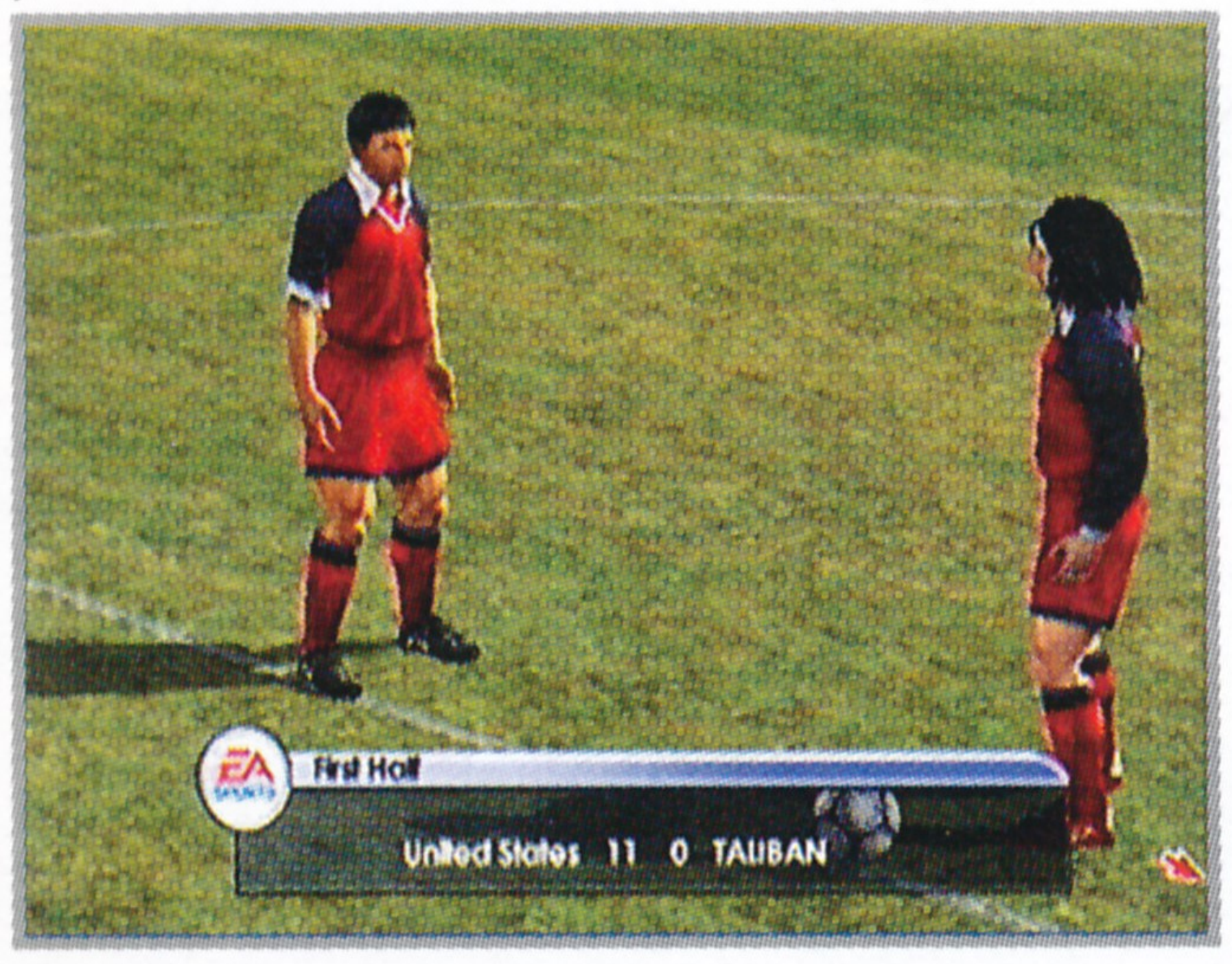


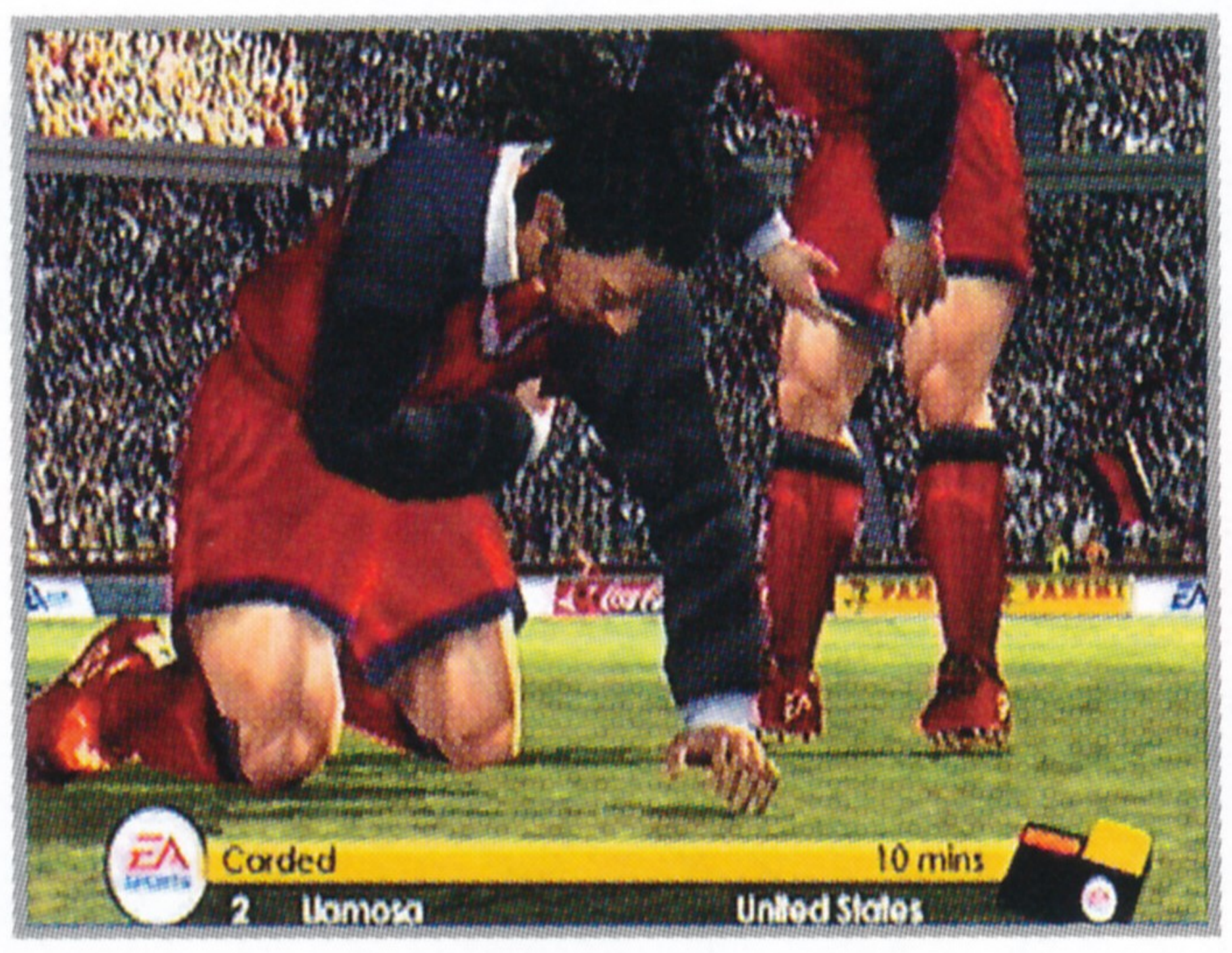


FIFA Soccer 2002

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** EA Sports • **Release Date:** Fall • **Stage:** 95%

EA's FIFA franchise has remained at or near the top of the heap since it first appeared in 1994. With this PS2 version, gamers will be treated to the best soccer sim yet by the publisher. All new customization options let you tweak gameplay as well as personalize the game with your own created teams, players and leagues. All of the standard game modes return, but this time you'll actually be able to live the "highs and lows" of the FIFA World Cup Qualification process. EA Sports has also expanded the game's Rewards system. By completing in-game tasks, you'll be able to unlock additional modes and cool cheats.

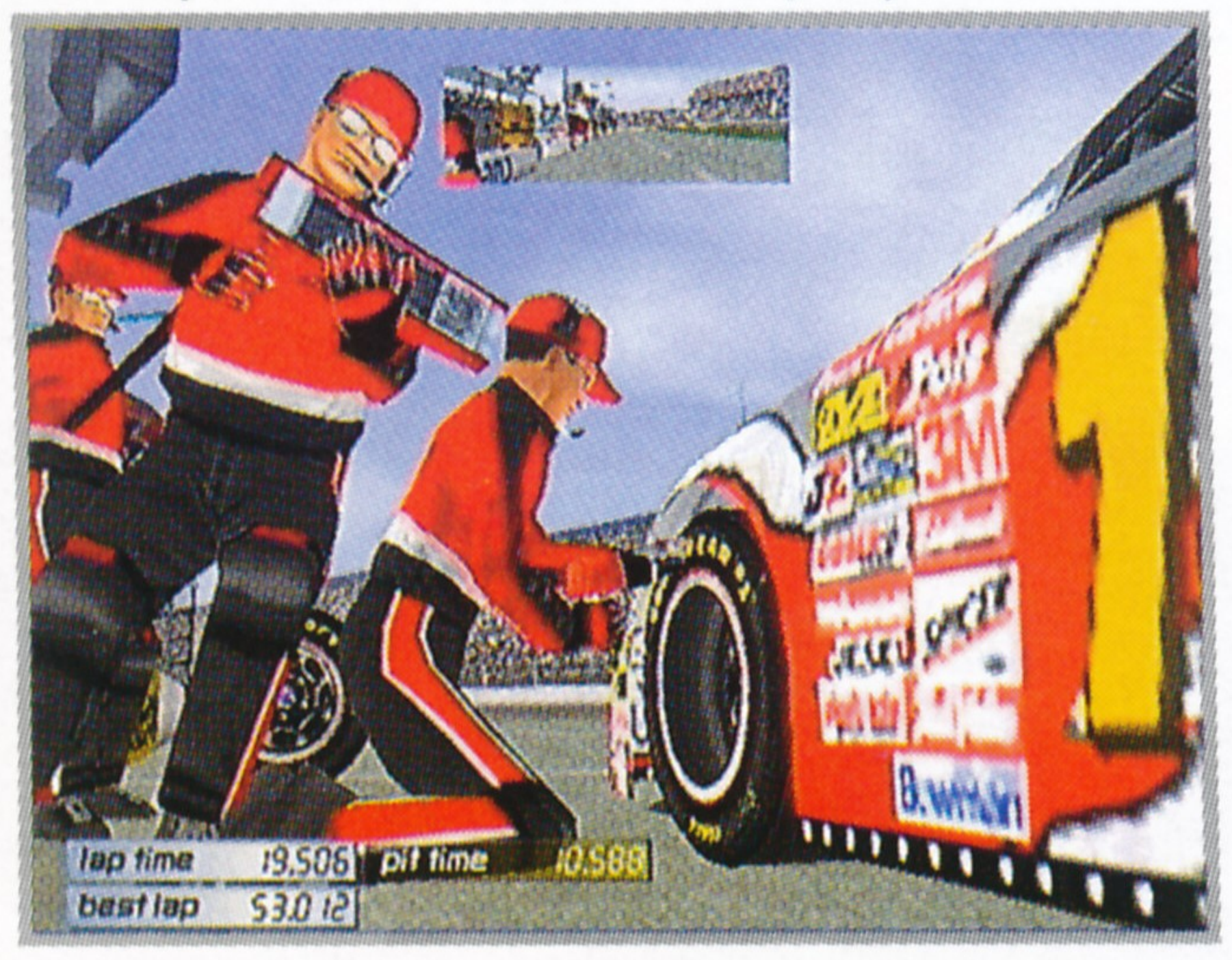


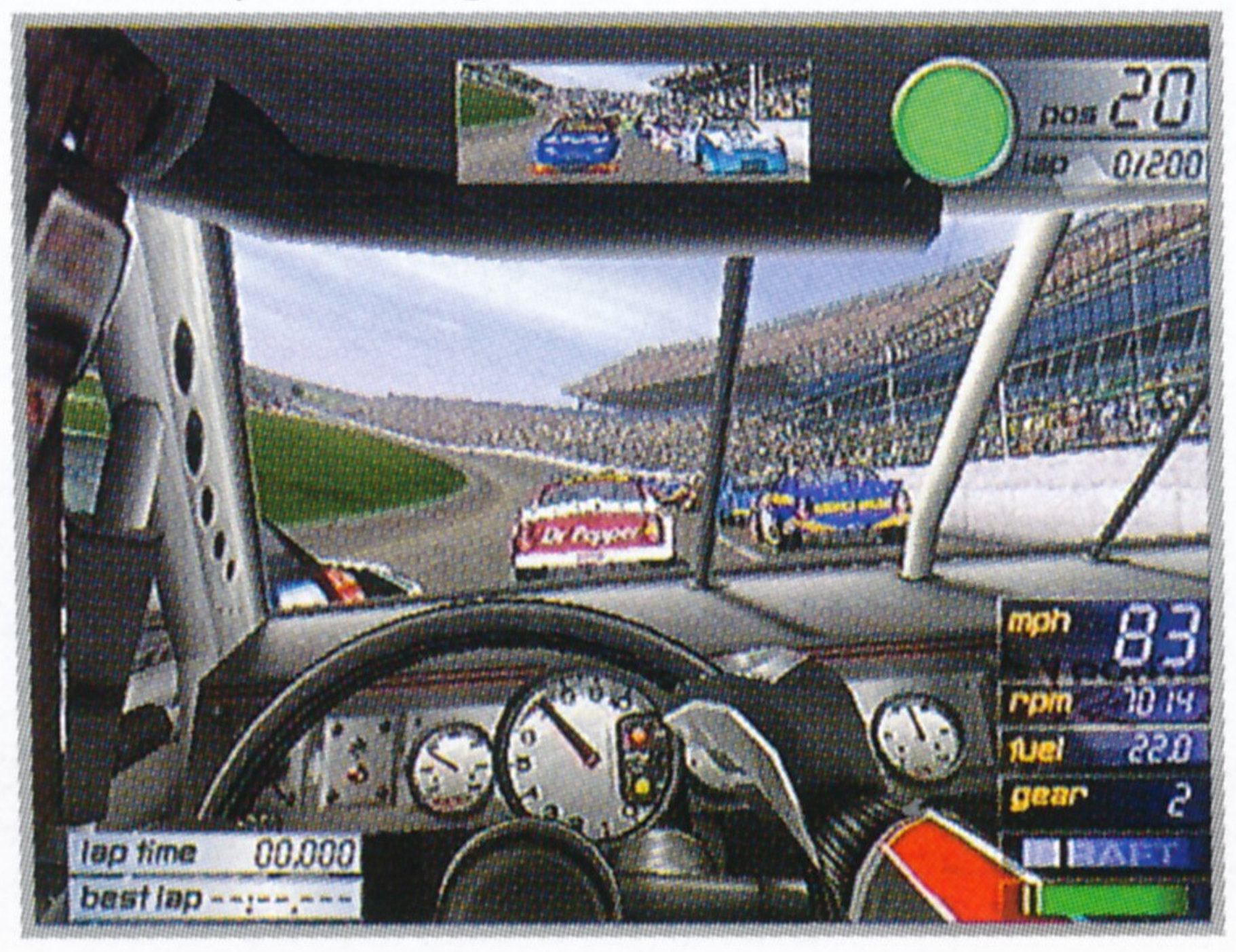


NASCAR Thunder 2002

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** EA Sports • **Release Date:** Fall • **Stage:** 90%

Aside from the hillbilly Lynard Skynard music, it seems EA's NASCAR has made the necessary strides to reach the front pack. Last year's game left a sour taste in our mouths, but with a refined game engine and smarter AI, NASCAR Thunder 2002 looks sweet. Career Mode features multiple seasons where players garner sponsors and slap decals on a custom car. Additionally, you can expect improved CPU pack strategy, detailed pits, and greatly enhanced graphics and frame rate (NASCAR 2001 was awful in this department). Now, if only we could convince EA that "Thunder" and down home country twang don't mix.



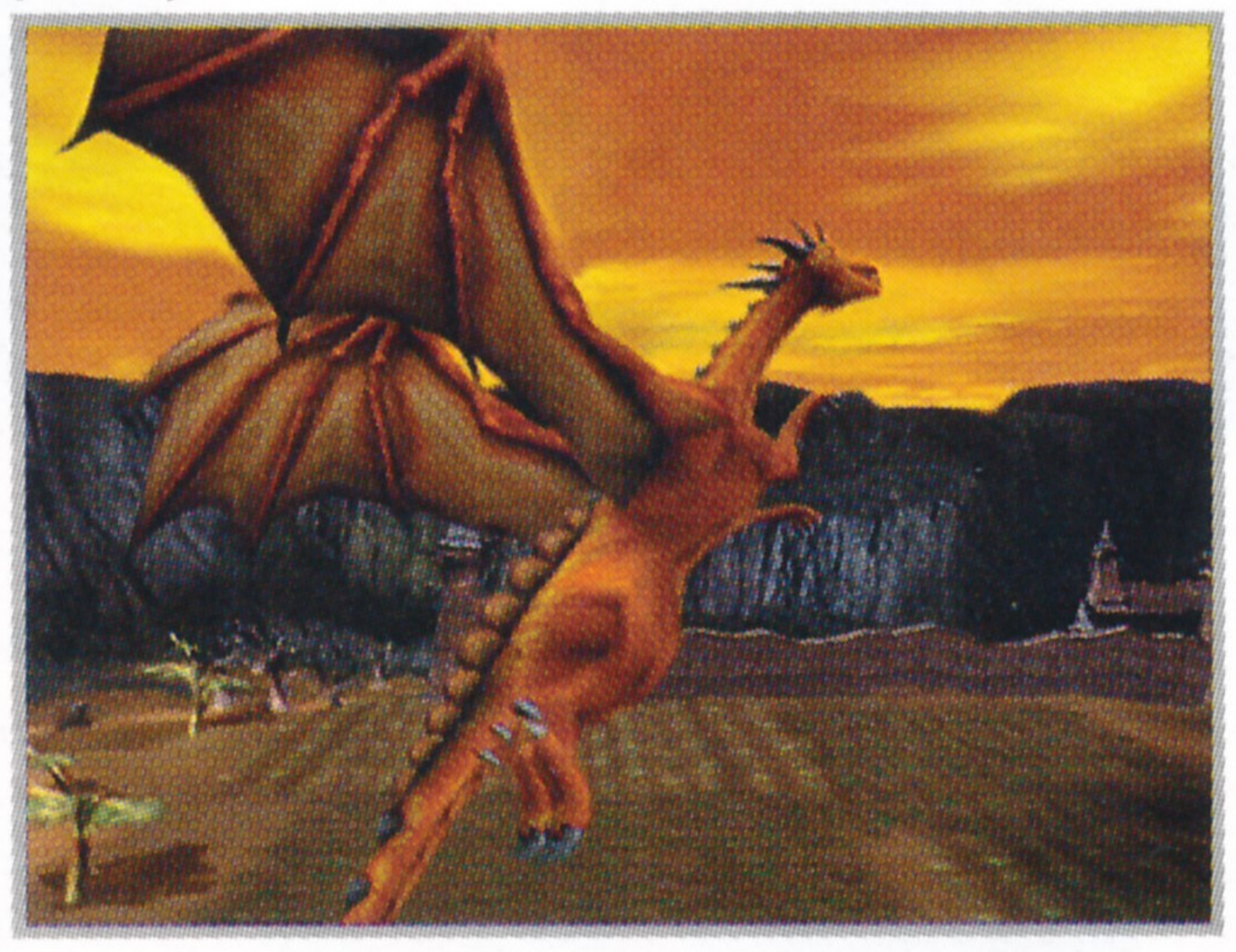


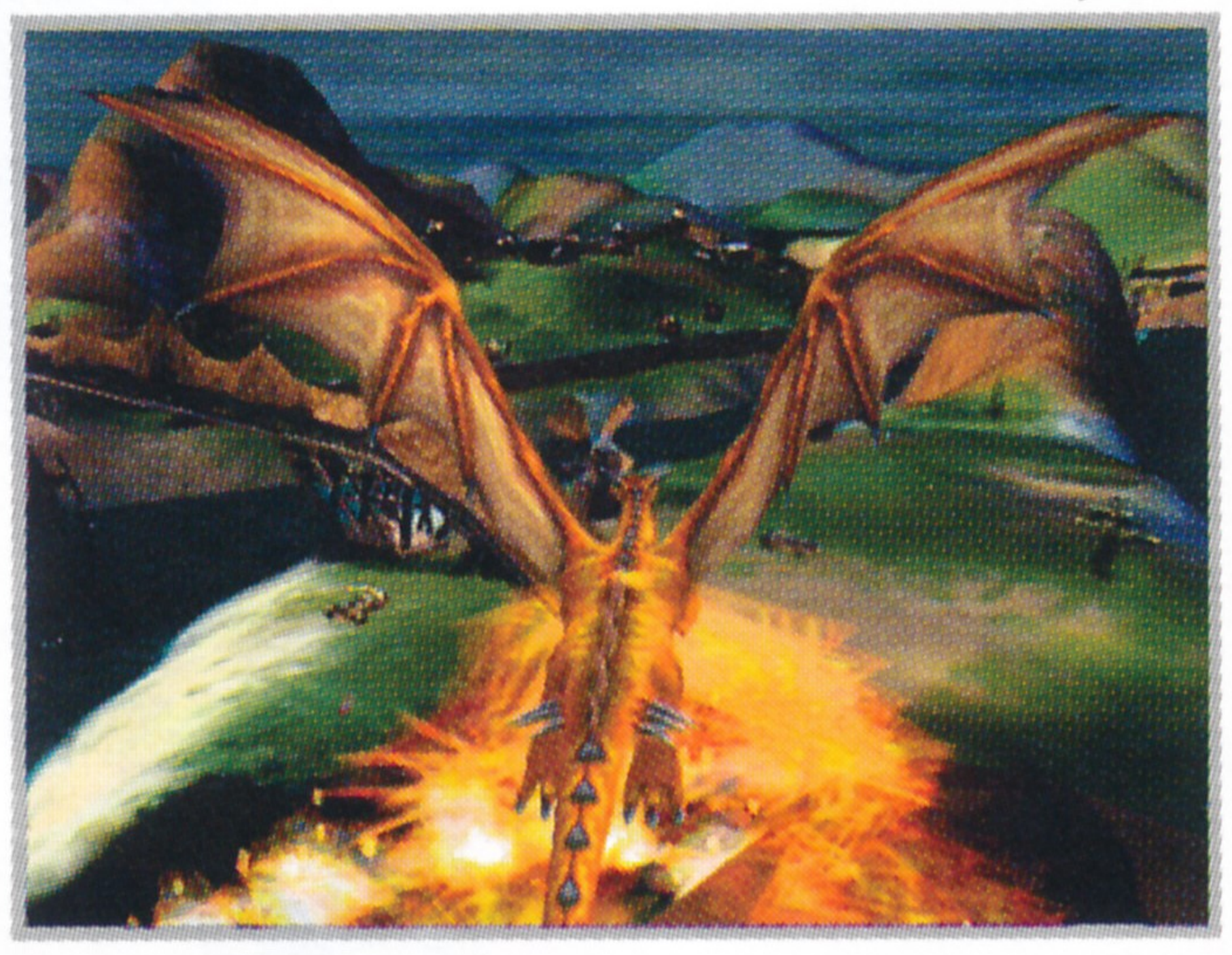
Dragon Rage

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** 3DO • **Release Date:** Winter • **Stage:** 75%

Any Dungeons & Dragons player whose character could lift a two-handed sword always had a dragon as a steed. Nothing was cooler than imagining your character atop a fire breathing dragon.

The truth be told, no self respecting dragon would ever let a pesky human ride astride him. Cael is just that type of dragon. As one of the last remaining dragons that are being hunted by the Orcs, gamers will play as Cael from a 3rd person perspective. As this gold dragon, you will fight (and eat, yummy) a variety of enemies including Orc air units, ground patrols and cows. (Did you know cows have souls? True story.)



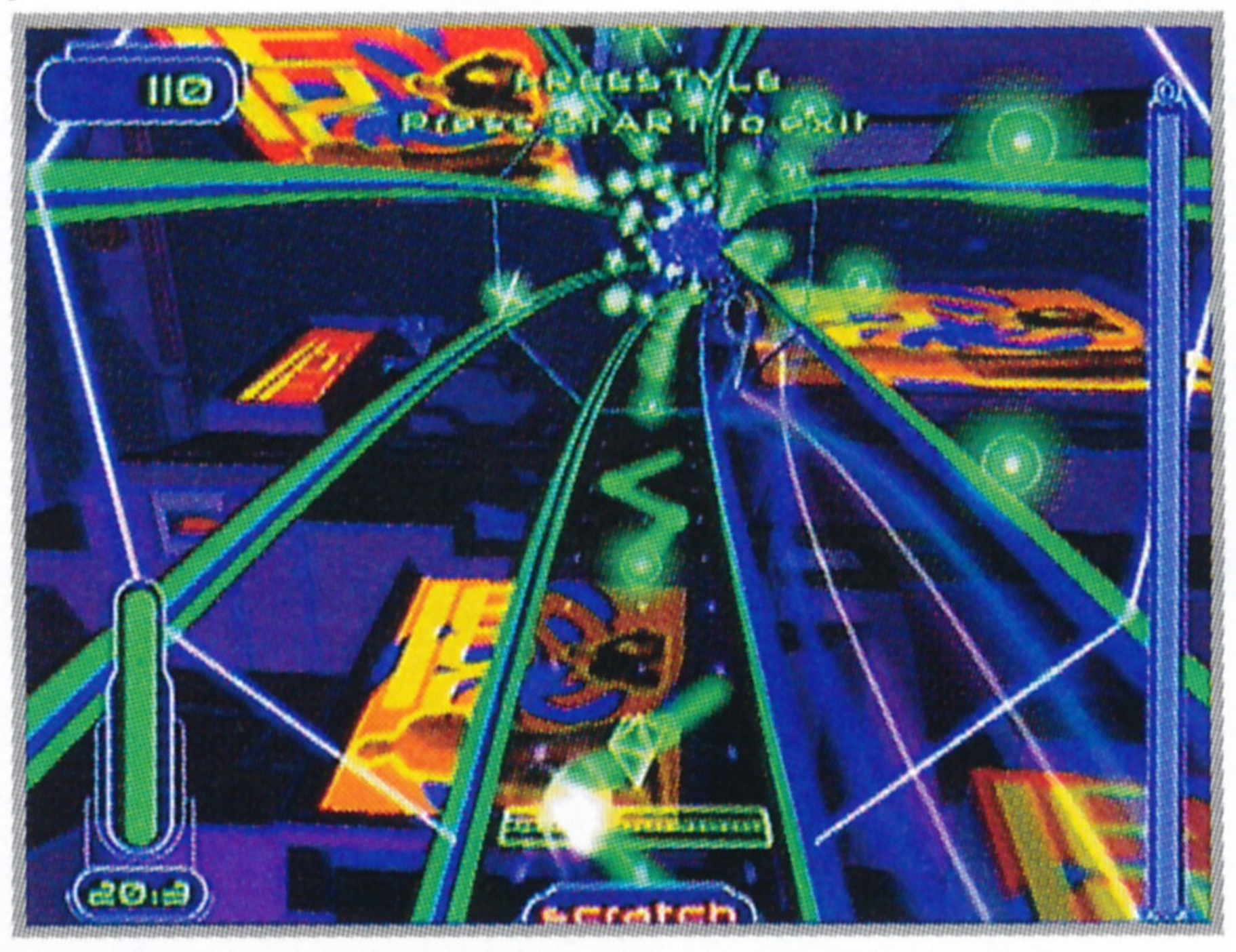


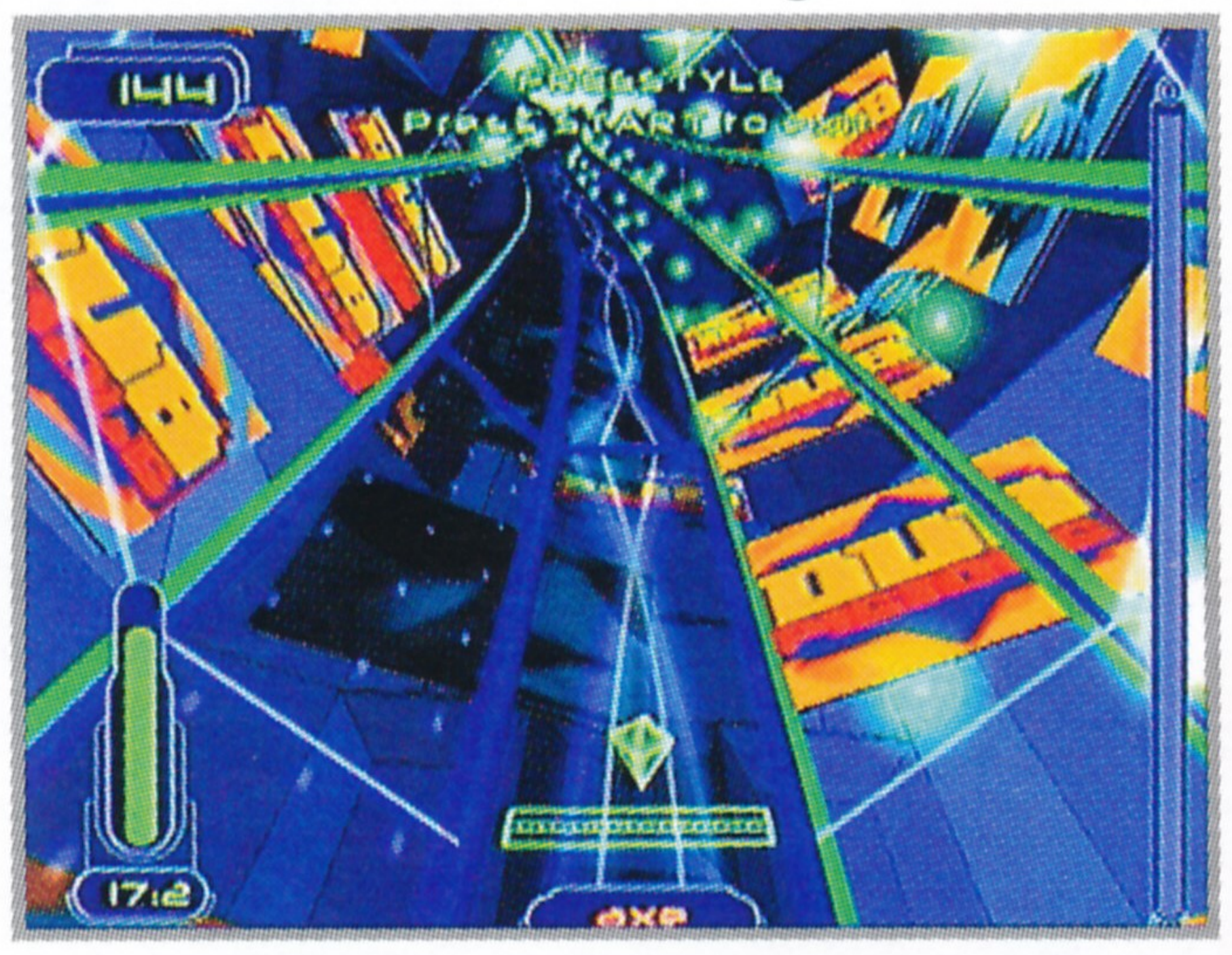
Frequency

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** Sony • **Release Date:** Fall • **Stage:** 85%

One night in October 1986, Dan Rather was walking down a Manhattan street when an assailant approached him, repeating the phrase "Kenneth, what is the frequency?" The attacker blamed news media for beaming signals into his head, and thought if he could just find out the correct frequency, he could block those signals.

Well, guess what freak! It wasn't the news media, it was a signal from the future! From the stylistic music title Frequency…and you know what? We can't get its songs out of our heads either and next year, Sony's taking the signal online. Let the sonic assault begin!



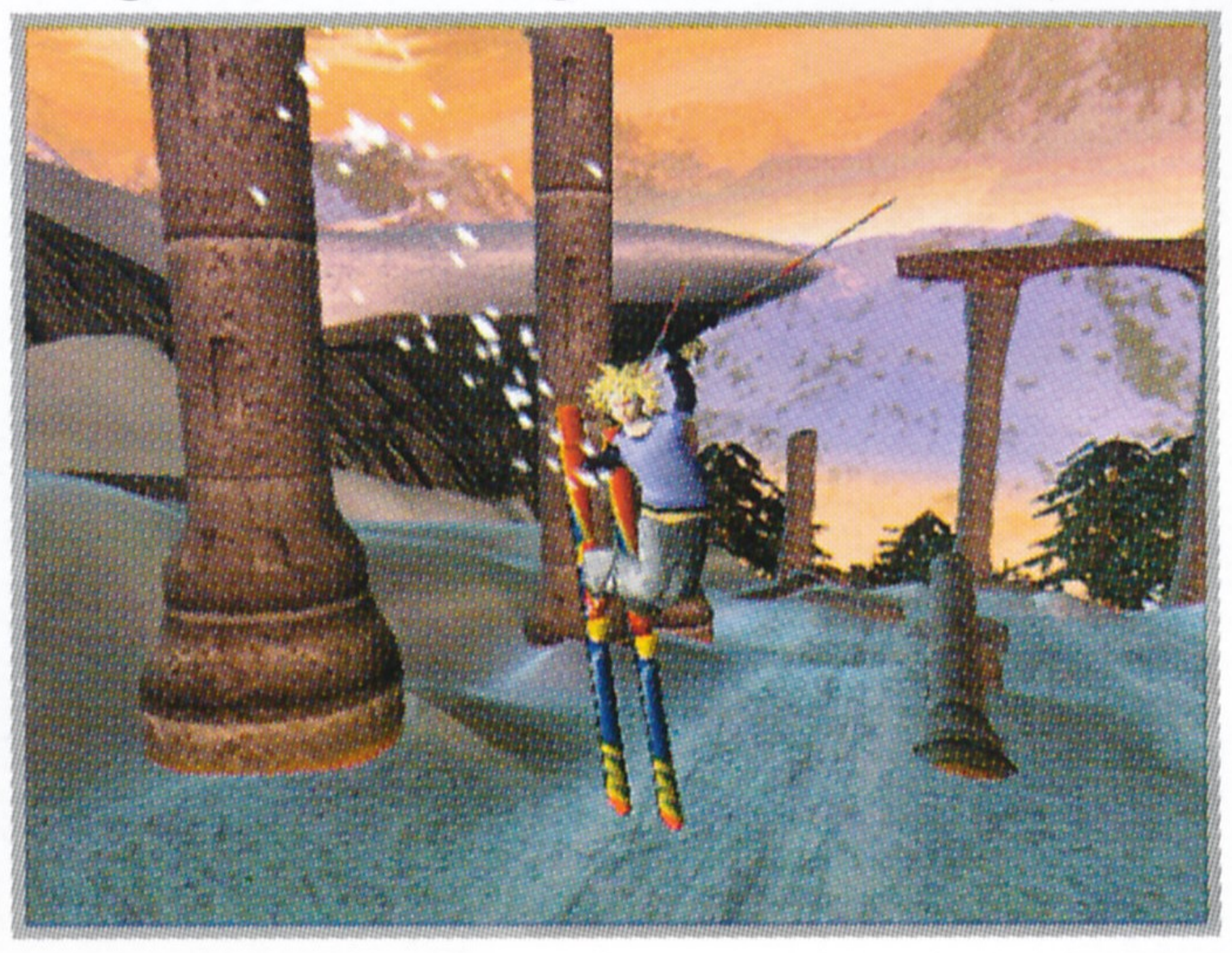


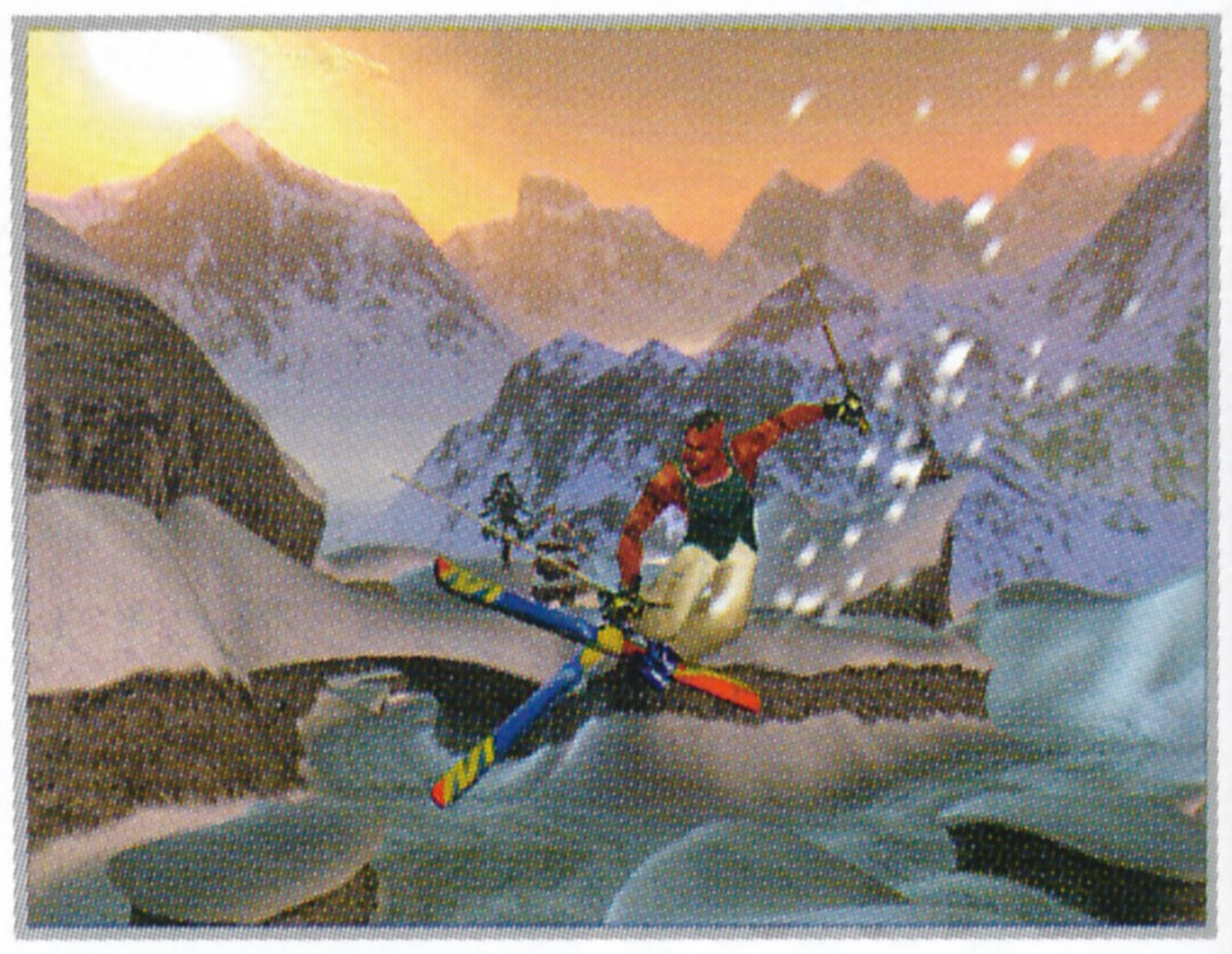
Jonny Moseley: MT

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** 3DO • **Release Date:** Winter • **Stage:** 80%

The old saying goes "Two heads are better than one" but the new edge saying is "Two skis are better than one board." While snowboarding is essentially an extension of skateboarding, freestyle tricking on a set of skis is a whole different beast.

JM: Mad Trix has gone to great lengths (and heights) to not only capture the totally different feel of freestyle skiing, they are also seizing the entire ski lifestyle. Rack up the points on different trail based courses and players get a chance to be on the cover of skiing magazines and star in their own extreme skiing movie as they are airlifted to the top of a mountain.

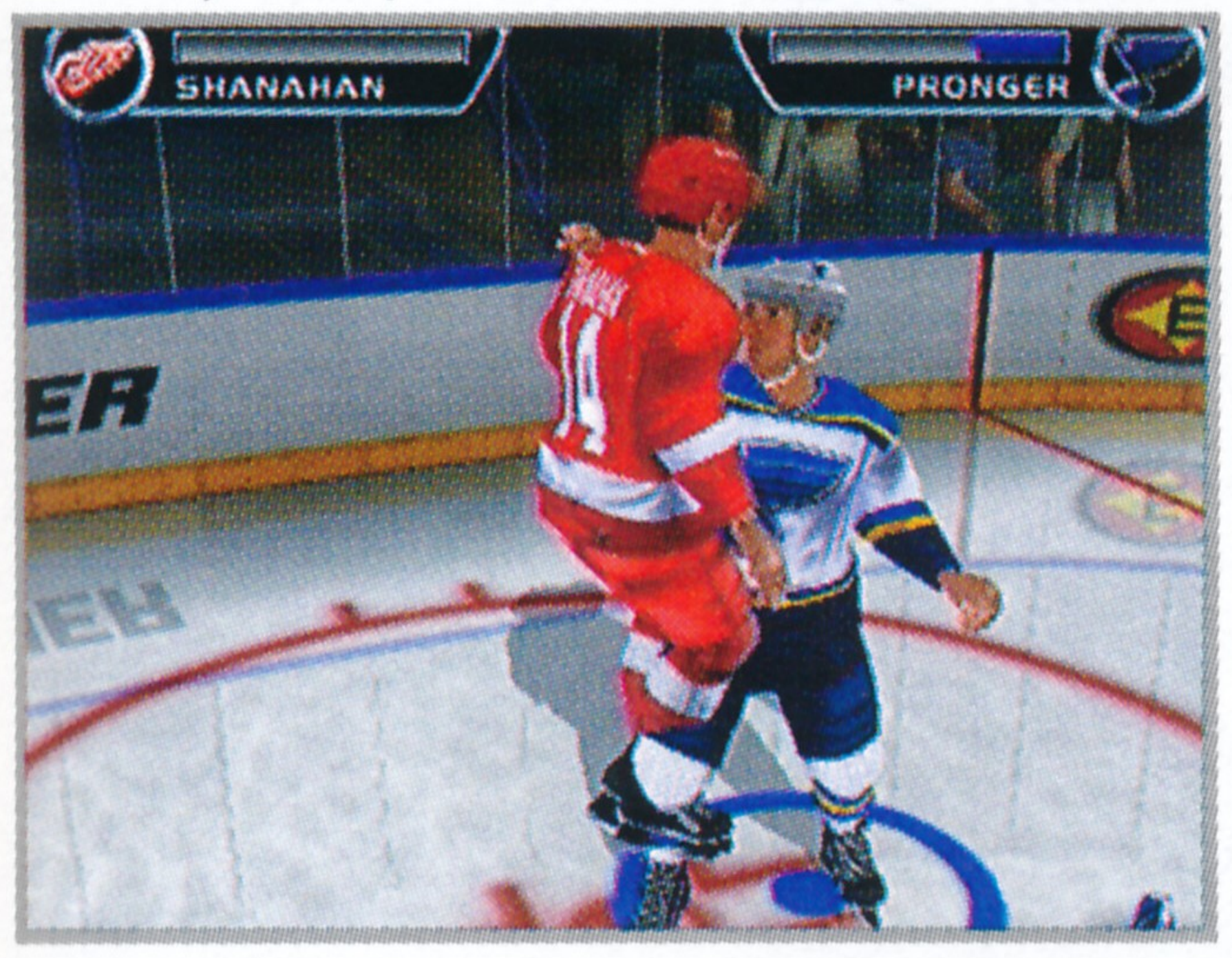


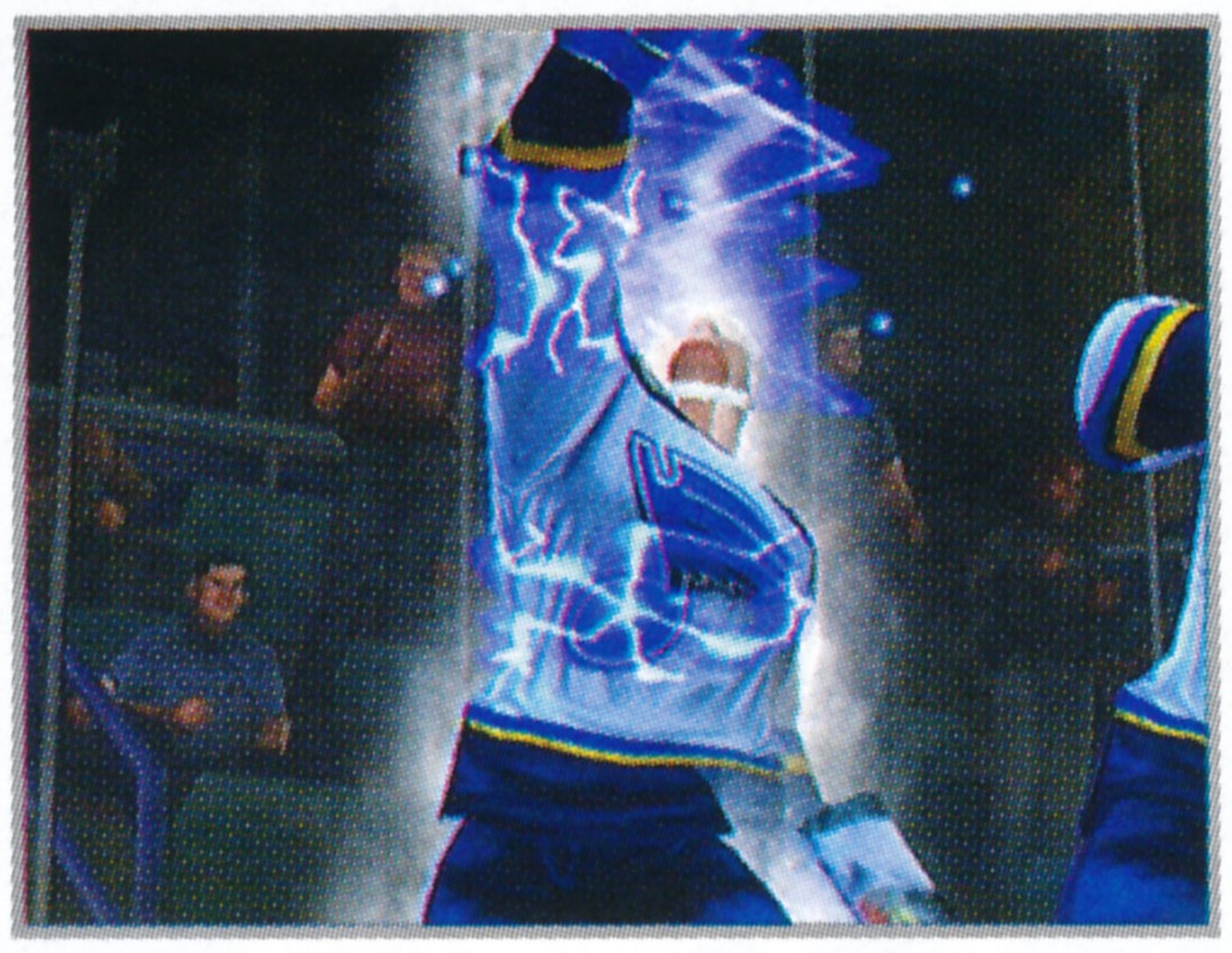


NHL Hitz 20-02

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** Midway • **Release Date:** October • **Stage:** 95%

Here are a few tidbits concerning NHL Hitz for you hockey nuts that can't wait for next month's review: 1). A lengthy Franchise mode wherein player attributes actually increase with experience. Go for the Midway Cup and defend the title over multiple seasons; 2). Cool Hockey Shop where users spend earned points on fantasy stadiums, historical jerseys, new teams and player heads; 3). Skills mode featuring dozens of mini-games. Want more? How about balls-to-the-wall three on three action, dynamic 3D crowds and stadium ambience, plus the best hockey fighting interface ever?





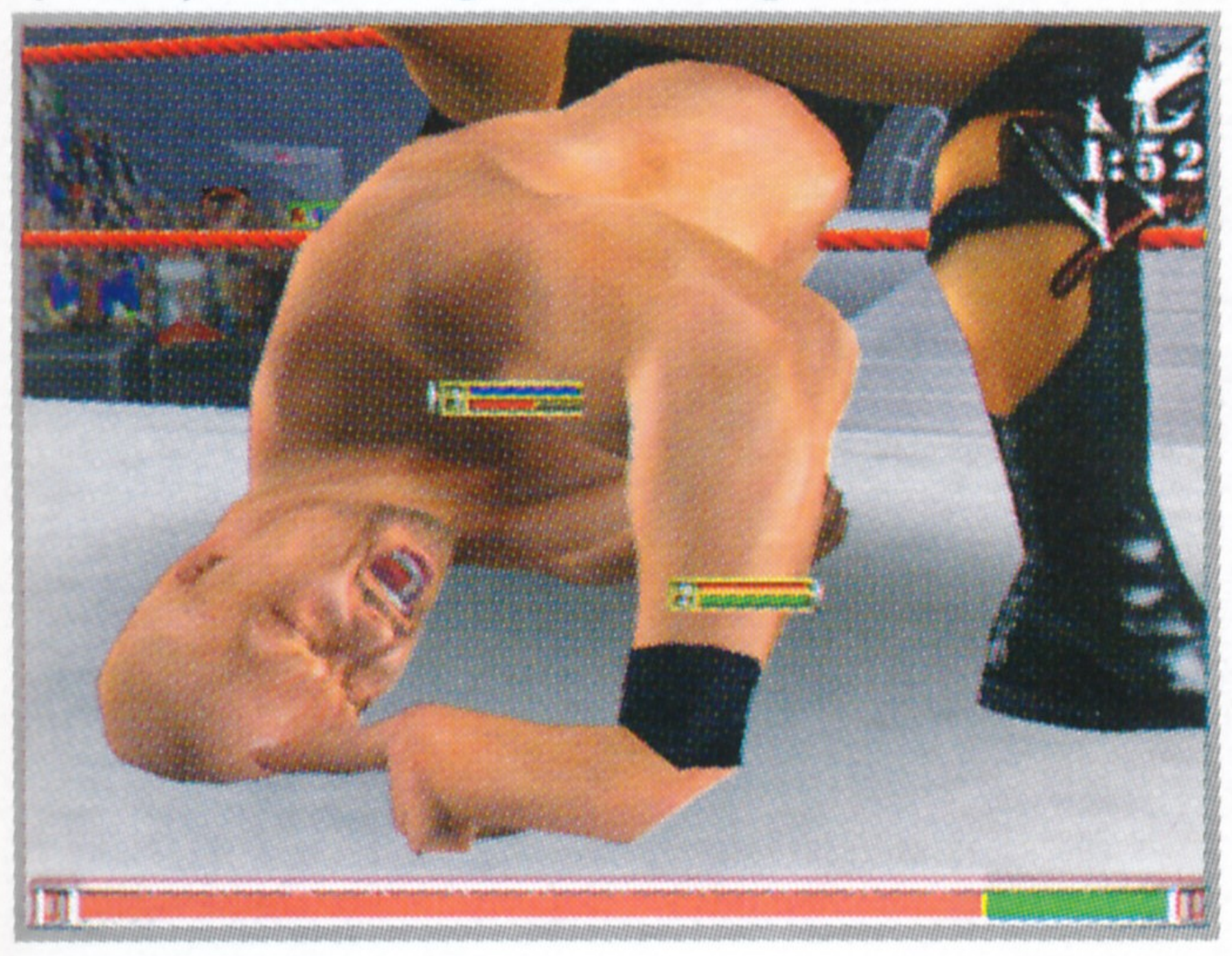
WWF Raw Is War

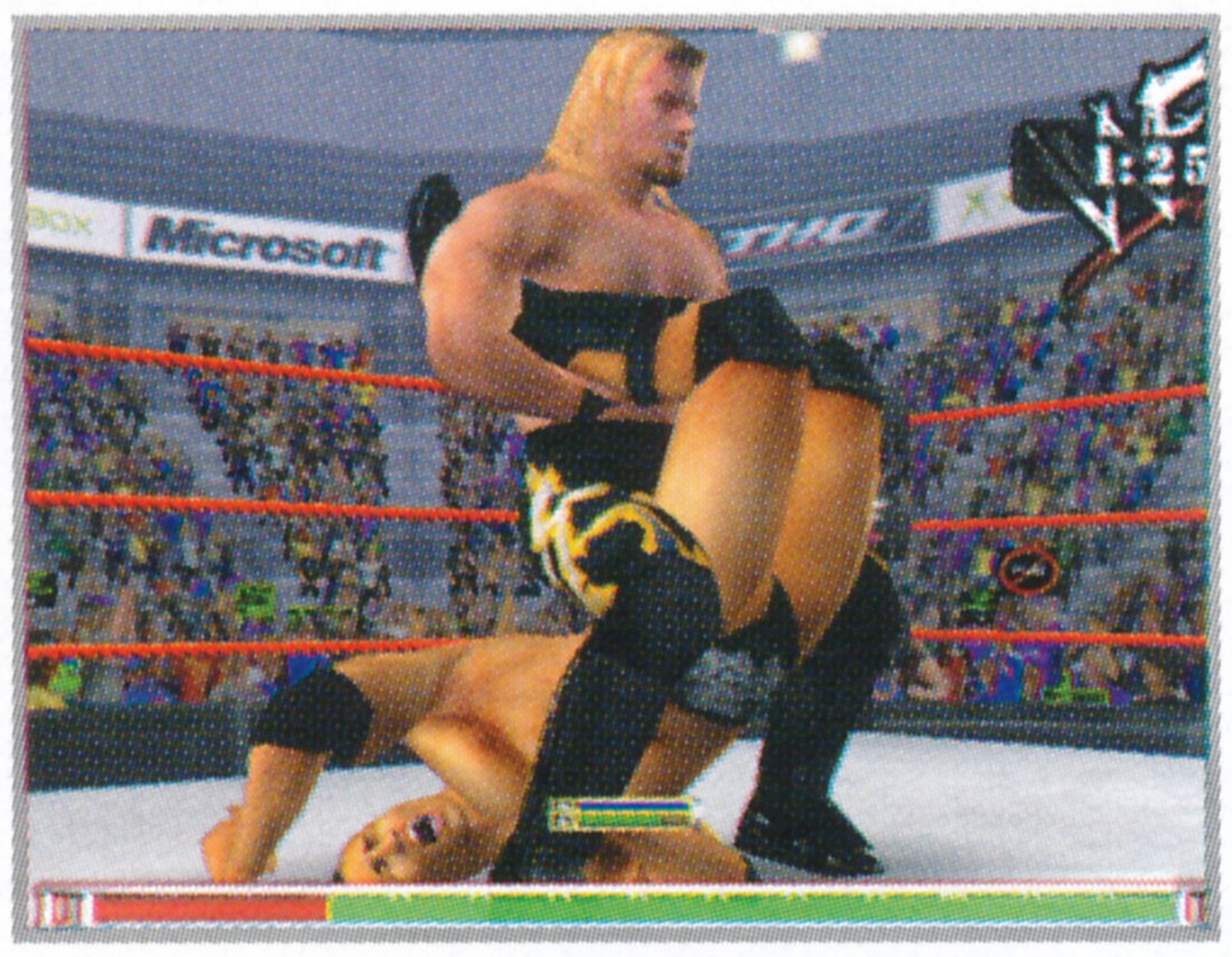
Platform: Xbox • **Publisher:** THQ • **Release Date:** Winter • **Stage:** 70%

Even behind closed doors at E3 there was one phrase that was constantly uttered upon seeing WWF Raw Is War for Xbox…"Damn, now we HAVE to get an Xbox."

The reason is that Raw Is War isn't simply Smackdown for Xbox, it is a completely different game. The quality of the graphics goes far beyond anything any other wrestling title has ever attempted and the gameplay is utterly different because Anchor Inc. (who produced UFC for the DC) is at the helm.

WWF Raw Is War is one title we can't wait to get our hands on and see just how it uses the Xbox Hardrive.

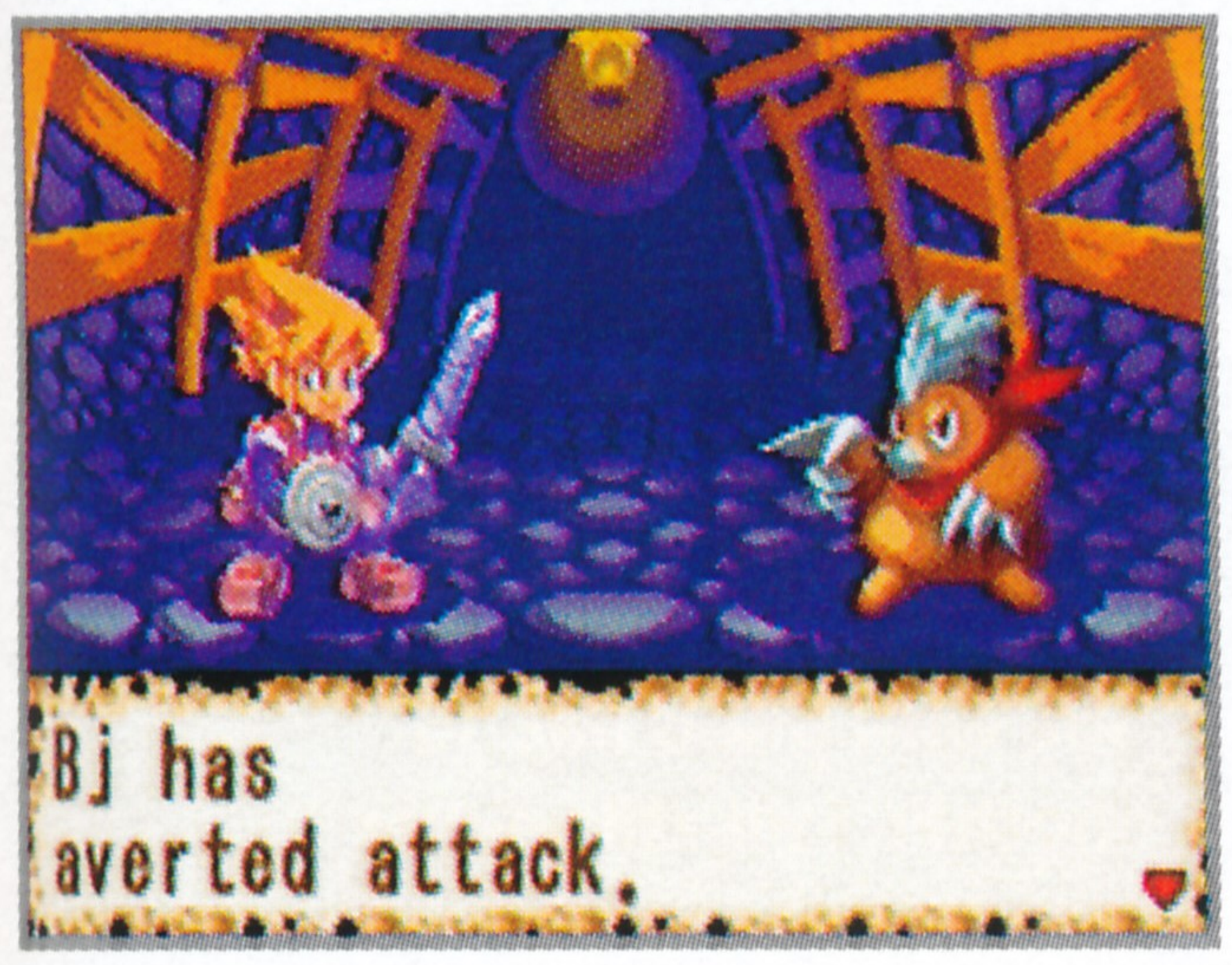




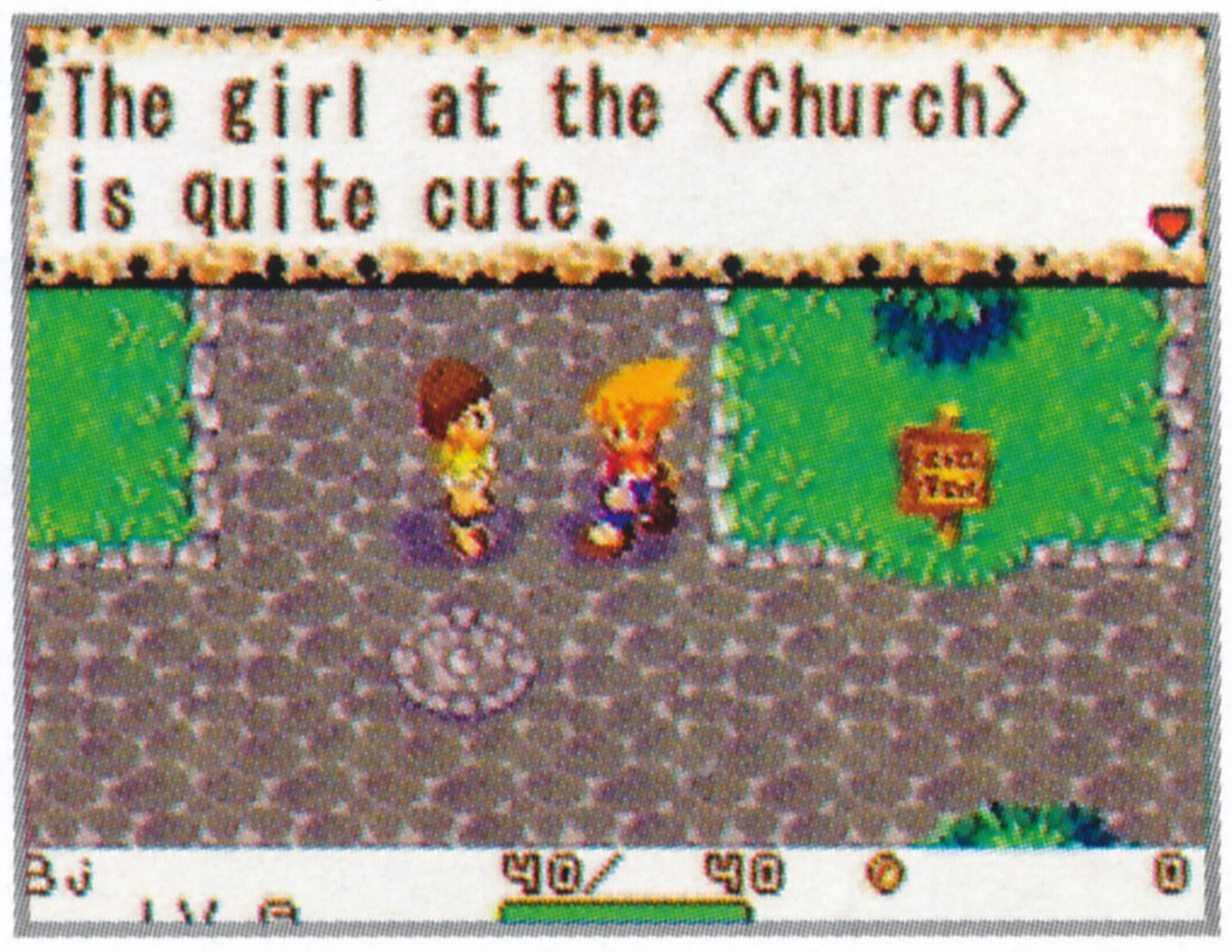
Dokapon

Platform: GBA • **Publisher:** AIA Games • **Release Date:** Fall • **Stage:** 90%

Pokemon...Crap, do over! Dokapon, AIA's new Game Boy Advance RPG, features easy access gameplay and likeable characters. Due before Christmas, this turn-based adventure is centered around the trials of a boy who has come of age. By passing a series of tests, he can be crowned an "adventurer," which, of course, is the goal of any self-respecting pre-teen male. Battles are based on a scissors-paper-rock system, meaning your offense or defense will be successful if you can beat your opponent's "throw." Dokapon features a deep weapons and armor upgrade system, as well as dozens of learnable spells and skills.



Bj has averted attack.

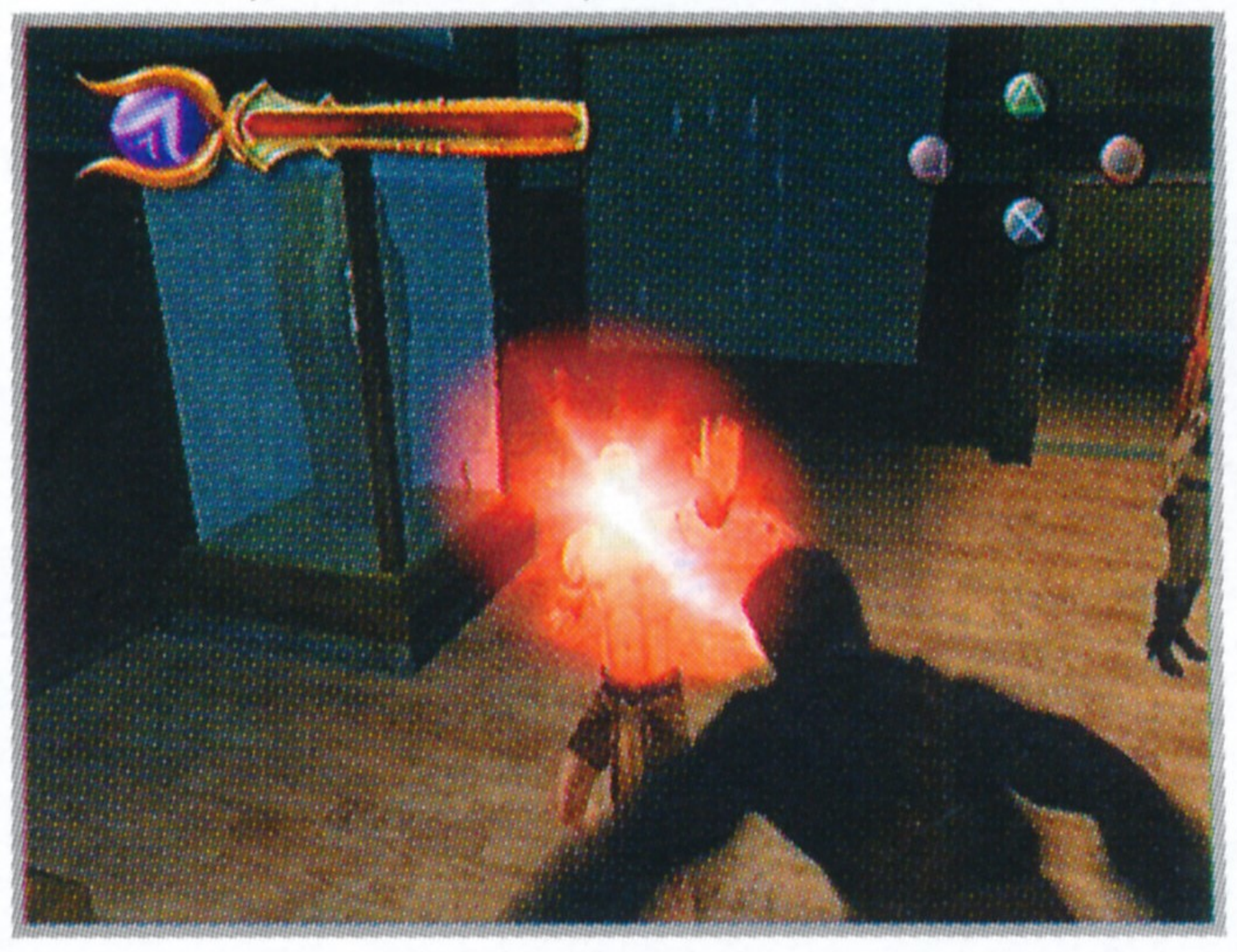


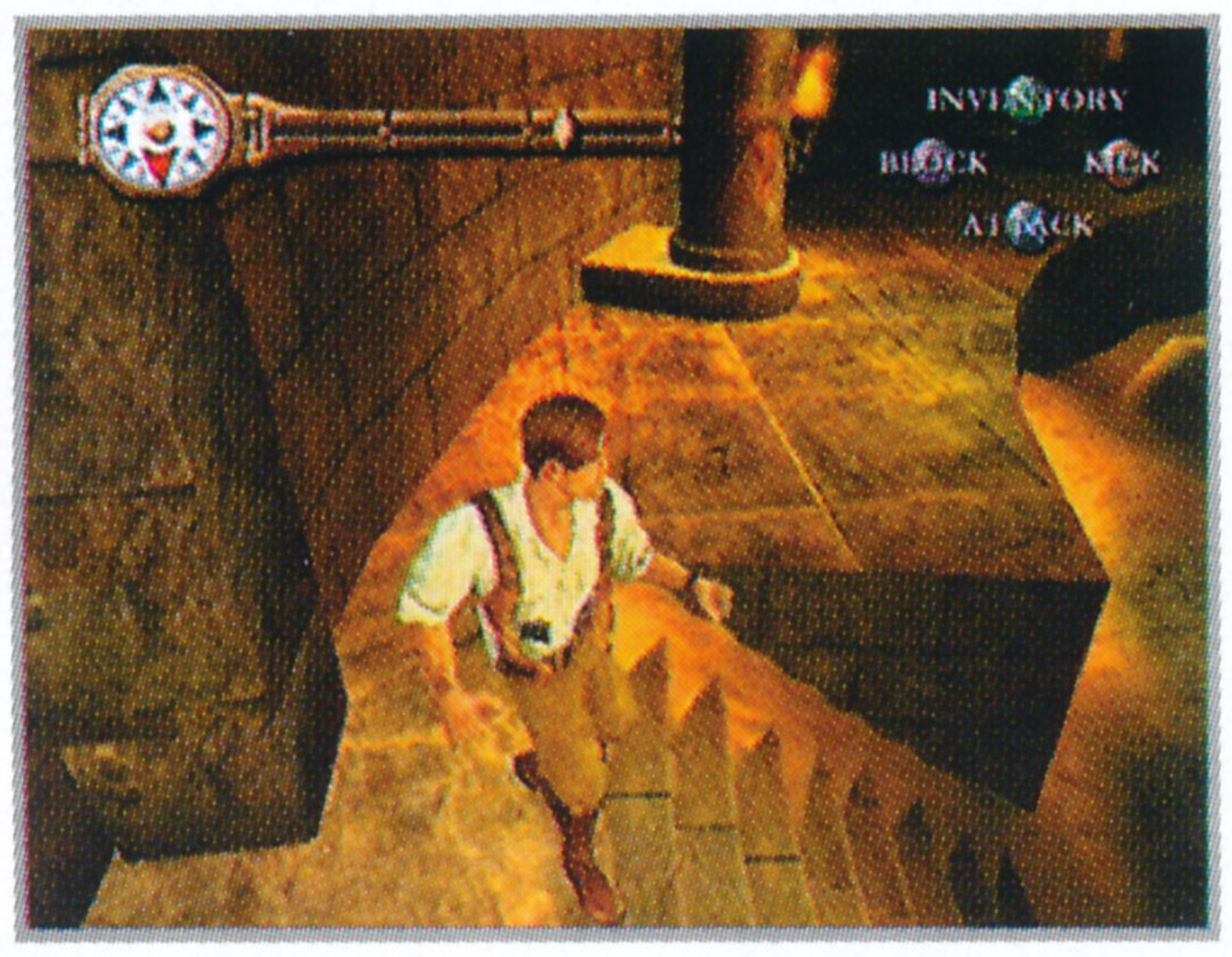
The girl at the <Church> is quite cute.

The Mummy Returns

Platform: PS2 • **Publisher:** Universal • **Release Date:** Fall • **Stage:** 90%

6000 years ago, the Scorpion King made a pact with Anubis. Though his new powers allowed him to defeat his enemies, the King was banished to the Underworld following his last victorious battle. Now, the anniversary year is upon us, and the Mummy has risen again. In The Mummy Returns, you'll choose to play as either Rick O'Connell, charged with saving the world again, or the villainous Imhotep. As Rick, you'll have a vast array of weapons to defeat the risen dead with, while Imhotep will rely on spells and soul-sucking to conquer the world. It will be up to you to decide the fate of mankind.



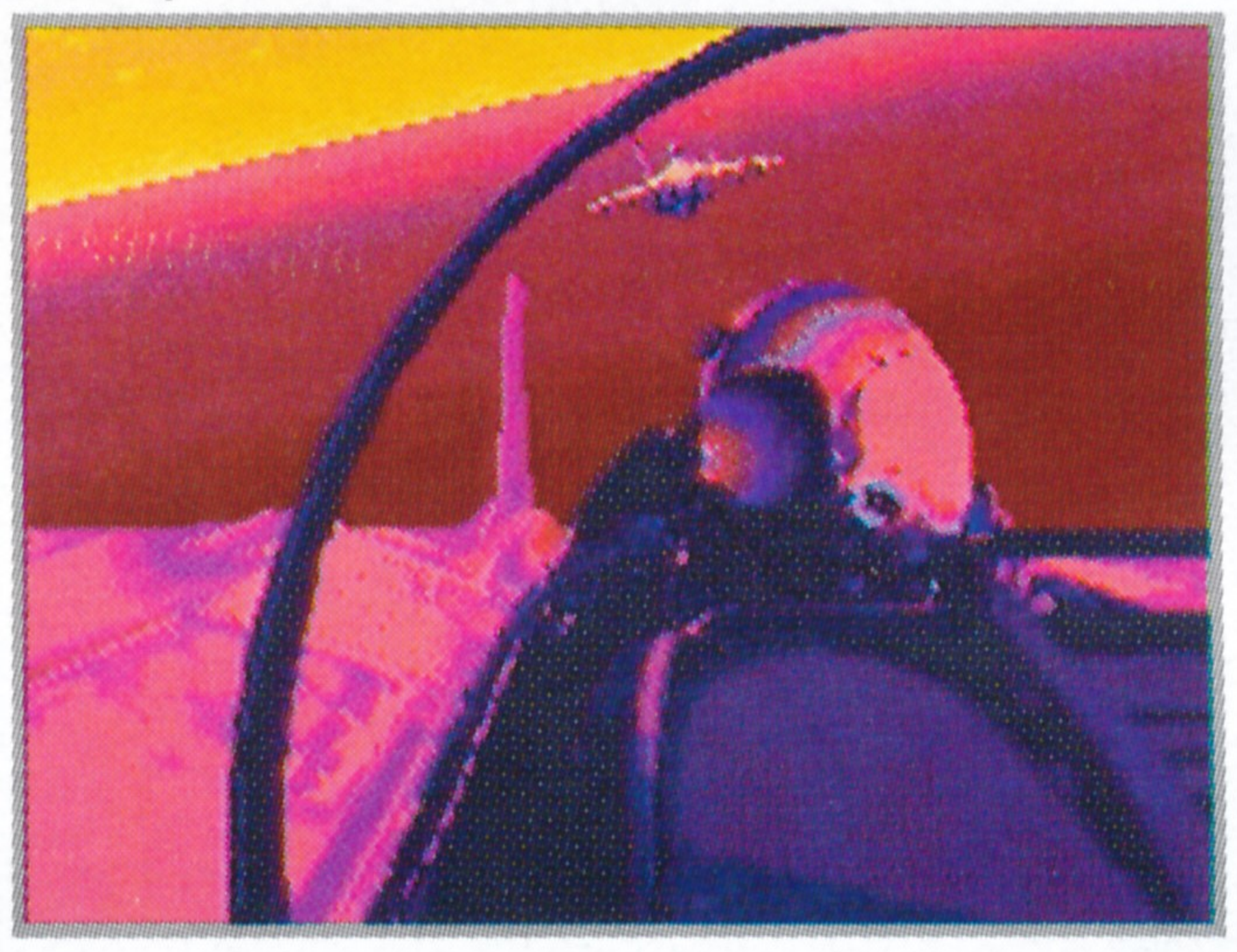


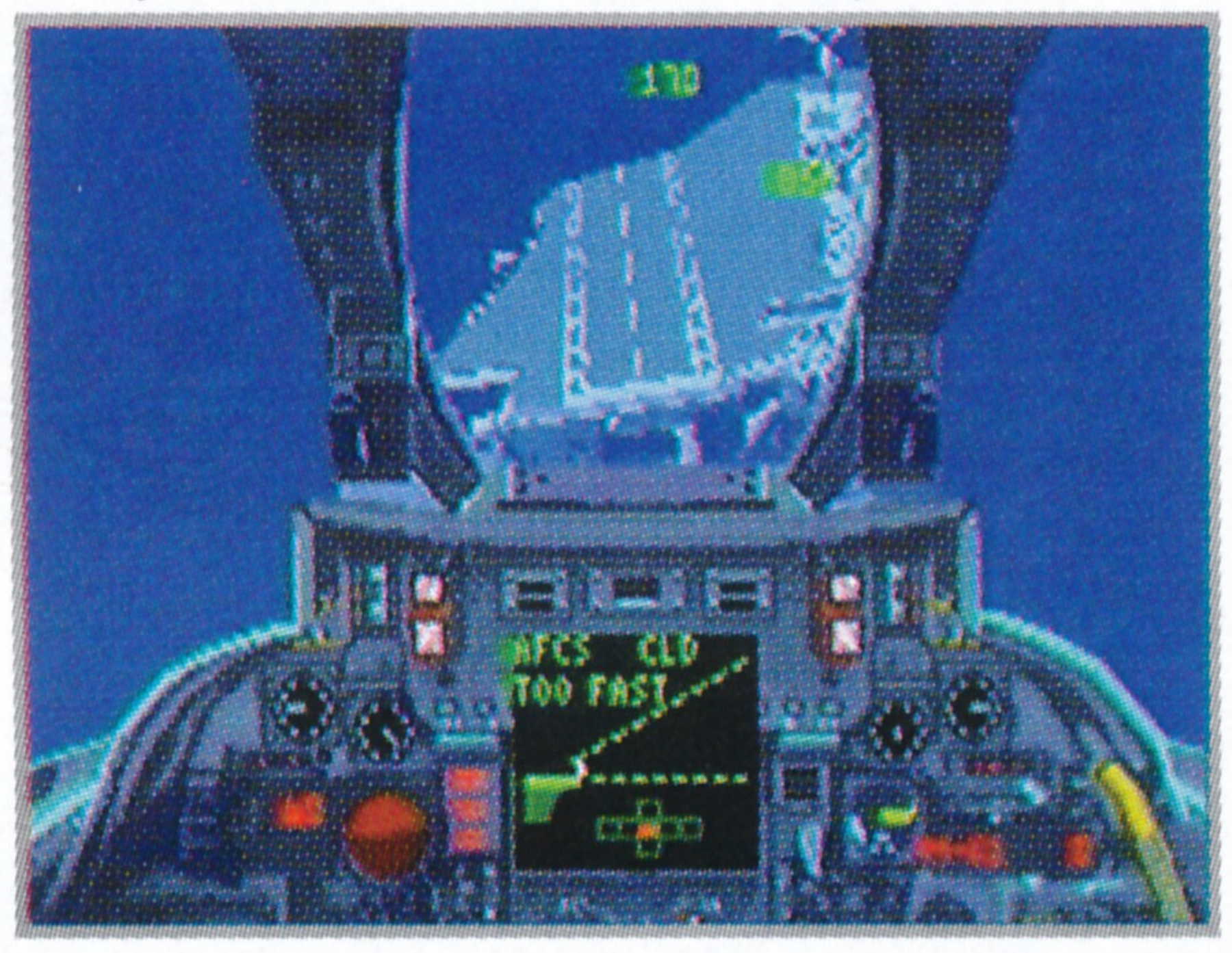
F-14 Tomcat

Platform: GBA • **Publisher:** Majesco • **Release Date:** Fall • **Stage:** 95%

Forget watching "Jag" reruns for your air warfare fix. It's time to grab the stick and take to the skies in this impressive little Game Boy Advance title from Majesco.

As China and Taiwan go to war (possibly over who has the better-looking "Made In" stickers) your job is to protect American interests in the region. Developer Pipedream has created a detailed cockpit and over-the-shoulder views of your six to help you splash enemy bogies. F-14 Tomcat will also feature amazing sound effects and music that should push the limits of your GBA's audio system. Just remember, if you need to eject watch that canopy.



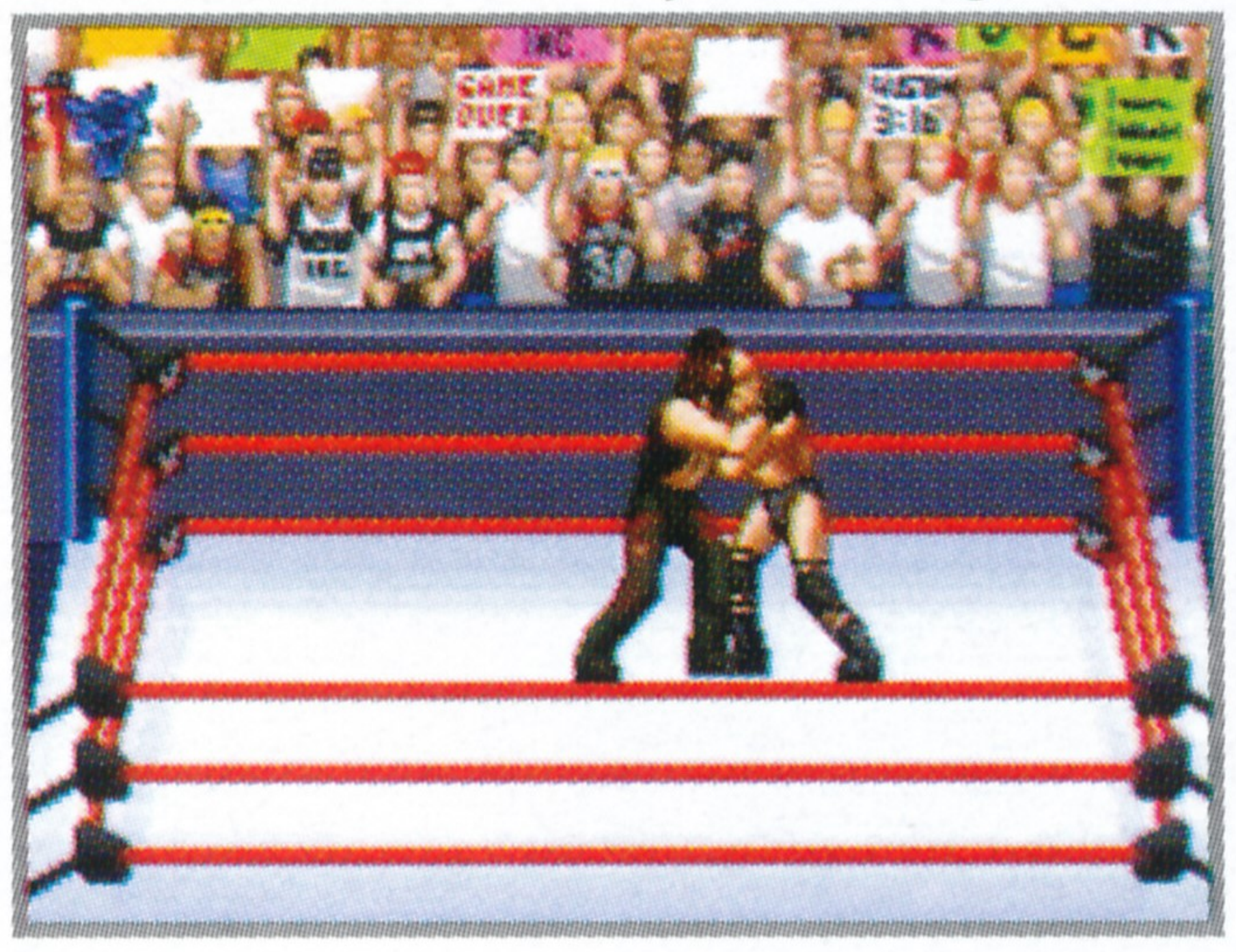


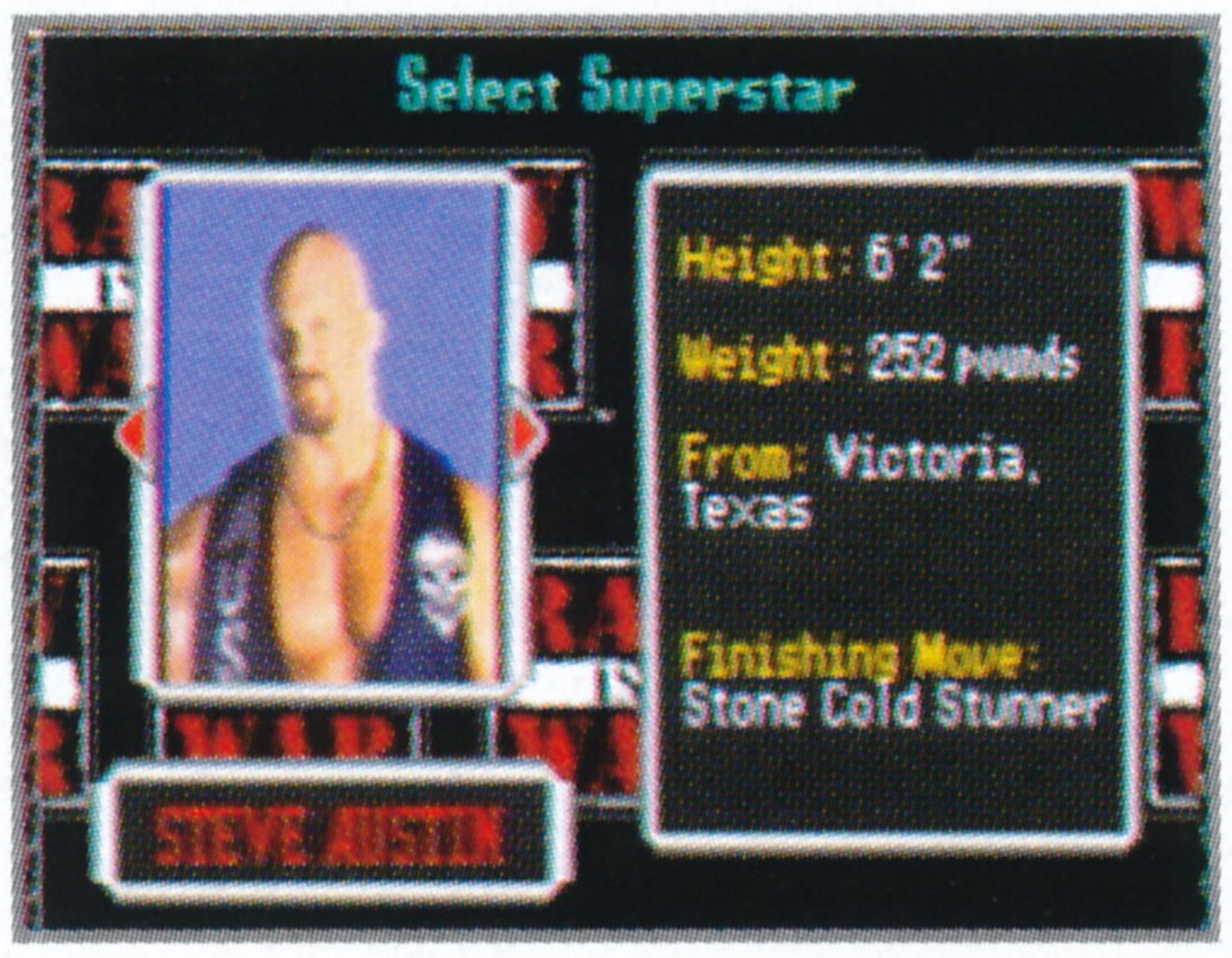
WWF: RTW

Platform: GBA • **Publisher:** THQ • **Release Date:** Q4 2001 • **Stage:** 70%

If the promise of WWF titles on PS2 and Xbox just isn't enough to sedate your craving for some fist flying wrestling action, perhaps you would like to get a little WWF to go? The GBA is the destination of THQ's WWF Road To Wrestlemania. While the screen may be smaller, the five different modes are just as big with choices ranging from Exhibition Mode to Season Mode (ala Smackdown!)

WWF: RTW will also include six different match types and seven separate venues where you can lay the Smackdown with wrestlers ranging from The Rock to Stonecold Steve Austin to The Undertaker.





Select Superstar

Height: 6'2"
Weight: 252 pounds
From: Victoria, Texas
Finishing Move: Stone Cold Stunner

STEVE AUSTIN

PS2
NHL 2002
EA Sports

•SM Rating: 89

As with EA's Madden series, 2001 was a landmark for NHL. Also similar to its gridiron brother, NHL 2002 features several major additions that keep the game in high standing here at •**SM**. And finally, like Madden 2002, NHL 2002 receives a slightly lower score than its predecessor.

Why the paradox? Because when a publisher reaches a landmark in an annual sports series, there are certain things we expect from succeeding versions. For instance, we hoped for an improved fighting interface. Last year's fights (for lack of a better word) blew, and they're basically untouched here. Also, ever since we played NHL Breakaway '98, we've been wishing for the occasionally dropped stick or flying helmet in EA's game, but even with PS2 powering it these features are ignored. The commentary has exited the rink on a stretcher. Don Taylor's annoying blabbery rarely has anything to do with hockey, and we often found ourselves yelling (in our best John Goodman voices), "Shut the f**k up, Donny!" Even the rink announcing took a poorly acted dive. Sucking helium and speaking into the microphone is childish and uncool.

However, none of these factors affect gameplay, which is still the best in the biz. The additions of NHL cards, Easter Eggs and a Franchise mode all help increase lasting appeal. More importantly, there are new control mechanics and smarter CPU AI. Manual dekes, saucer passes and user-controlled celebrations are met with stout goalies that adapt once they've been beaten, a more realistic checking interface and CPU offenses that work the attacking zone better than ever.

We recommend NHL 2002 to enthusiasts and casual players alike, as it still includes the nifty slider bars that let you tailor every aspect of the game to your liking. Just remember to turn off all the voices, and keep the gloves on.

NHL CARDS
NHL Card
STEVE YZERMAN
Flip Card
Advance
NHL.com/kids

•While "Stevie Y" remains in his Motor City home, other NHLers like Jagr and Brathwaite are moving around like high school freshmen at a sock hop

---

PS2
Devil May Cry
Capcom

•SM Rating: 92

Duante Culpepper. Dante Hicks. Just a couple of modern heroes. Now Capcom delivers the coolest Dante ever. As the son of Sparda, the legendary demon warrior who defeated the evil Mundus two millenniums ago, Dante runs a demon hunting service called Devil May Cry. One night a mysterious woman storms in, revealing Dante's fate and sparking a gothic adventure covering 23 missions.

DMC's graphics, sound and voice acting are all top quality. Especially noteworthy are the stunningly detailed 3D backdrops that at first appear prerendered but actually scroll cinematically. However, these are not what makes DMC so special. Instead, it's the deep control interface and its relative ease of use, and how it serves to present Dante as one of the coolest game heroes ever. Abilities include the use of swords as well as modern firearms (not to mention some Underworldly weapons). Dante equips two weapon types at a time for tandem use during combat. By combining attacks, he can juggle enemies or even hold himself aloft by jumping and firing downward. Incredible dexterity also allows him to dodge by rolling or leaping off of walls. He also has the very cool ability to trigger his demon form, in which he can fly and launch supernatural attacks.

Enemies and breakable objects release orbs when destroyed. These can be traded for powerups, increased vitality and new abilities. As he evolves, Dante builds an impressive arsenal of attacks ranging from throwing his sword to firing magma from his fists.

Though the bosses are gigantic and frightening, we tired of fighting the same bosses over and over. This is made up for in the final minutes of the game, as Dante faces one of the most visually stunning (and exceptionally difficult) final bosses we've ever seen. See this month's Decrypted for our tips on how to beat him!

• (Left) Dante REALLY loves his ability to fly (Middle) The bigger they are, well, the bigger they are (Right) Would you like your Griffon Original or Extra Crispy?

Time 00:05
CP 2/11
TIME 1:05
REPLAY
74mph
8th

PS2
Test Drive Off Road Wide Open
Infogrames

•SM Rating: 75

Sometimes a game will roll into our offices like a torpedoed boat limping into dock. It has gaping gameplay holes that you could drive a Hummer through but it somehow stays afloat and offers a truly entertaining experience despite its problems. Test Drive Off Road Wide Open slips into this category.

TDOFWO offers a limited number of environments and races. Circuit races have you jumping on and off road completing laps of a race while Blitz Races are a simple lightning assault to reach the finish line as fast as possible. The final mode, Scramble Races, has you crisscrossing the landscape trying to be the first to secure the proper number of checkpoints. While the tracks are expansive and riddled with shortcuts, they feel redundant after a few seasons.

Angel Studios was at the helm producing this game and it's pretty obvious. We personally think the psychotic AI of the Boarder Patrol from Angel's Smuggler's Run have taken up second jobs as off-road competitors in Wide Open. Competing drivers don't hesitate to spin you at every turn (or straightaway for that matter). The view, while great for driving, doesn't allow you to see the offending driver working his way up to twirl you from first to sixth place. The upgrade system is also very generic. There is no way to tweak any portion of a vehicle. You simply have to purchase the offered upgrade for the vehicle. One portion that is a bit odd but works to your advantage is when buying a car, you can race it for a track or two and sell it back for the same price. This is a necessity early in the game when you need a car with good climbing ability in one race and one with good flat out speed in another. Still, this never gives the player a chance to feel the car is his or her own.

Coming
November 2001

SHREK™

Easily the most impressive aspect about the game is its graphical prowess.

– GameSpot July 2001

Shrek looks gorgeous and its attention to detail is astounding...

– Expert Gamer September 2001

The production values are movie-like...They'll wonder if you are playing the game 'Shrek', or watching the movie *Shrek*. And people will get hooked.

– cnn.com May 2001

All new environments!
Plus, New characters
designed by
Todd McFarlane!
XBOX
SHREK
RP
TDK

RATING PENDING
RP
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Visit www.esrb.org
or call 1-800-771-3772
for rating information

DREAMWORKS™

www.shrekgame.com

XBOX

TDK®
mediactive

Shrek ™ & © 2001 DreamWorks L.L.C. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

PS2
Harvest Moon: STH
Natsume
•SM Rating: 90

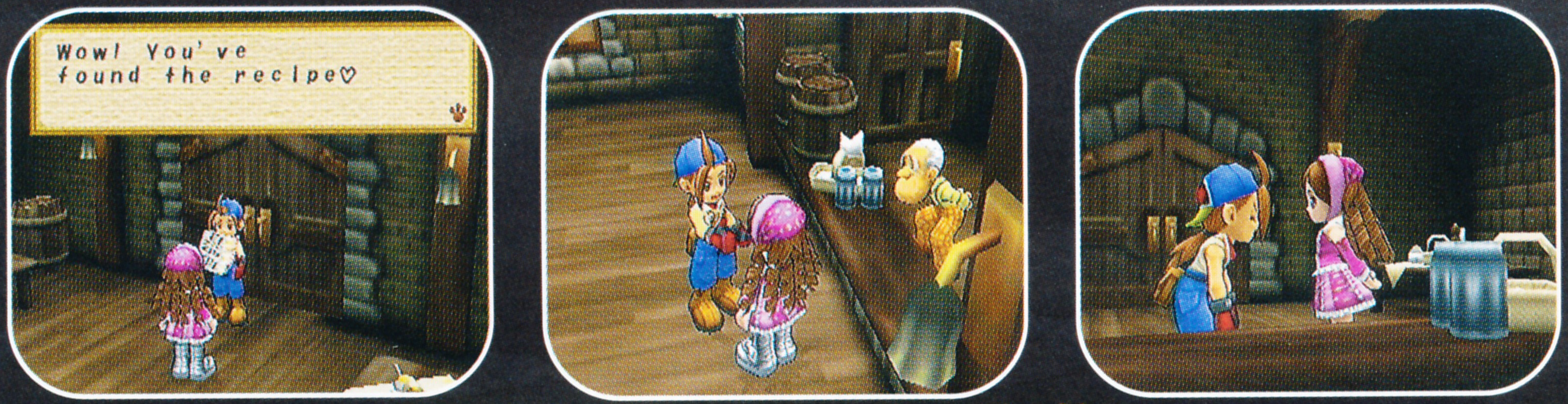
Harvest Moon (also known as Farmer Fantasy around the •SM offices) has always been one of our favorite franchises. From our first experiences with the series on SNES to its trips to the N64, Game Boy and PSX, we have never been let down by the series.

Harvest Moon: Save the Homeland takes the series in a new direction. The graphics use cell shading to the fullest extent and take the cutesy look of the series even further than before. The biggest change to the series is the focus and the multiple storylines. Save the Homeland moves away from making a successful farm as the main focus and instead centers on, just as the title states, Saving the Homeland. Now, don't think that farming is not the central theme. Many of the quests are focused on your farming prowess but even if you end up rolling in the dough at the end of the year, if you have not found some way to stop the town from being destroyed, it will not matter.

The new layout also gives STH something it was missing before: replay value. There are at least nine different ways to save the town. Successfully complete one side-story and you will not only succeed in rescuing the town from the bulldozers of the theme park building crazies but you will also be able to restart the game using all of the livestock you acquired the first time around. This is a title we could see ourselves playing through nine times just to get all the endings.

Make sure you read the manual before beginning the adventure, even if you have played other HM titles. The multiple plot set-up may confuse players about just what they should be doing. Just take your time and focus on one storyline at a time.

Harvest Moon: STH is an interesting new direction for the series that still has the core addictiveness from the previous releases.


Wow! You've found the recipe♡

•Our hero demonstrates his knowledge of the opposite sex by putting his moves on the town ladies

---

PS2
Top Gun: Combat Zones
Titus
•SM Rating: 76

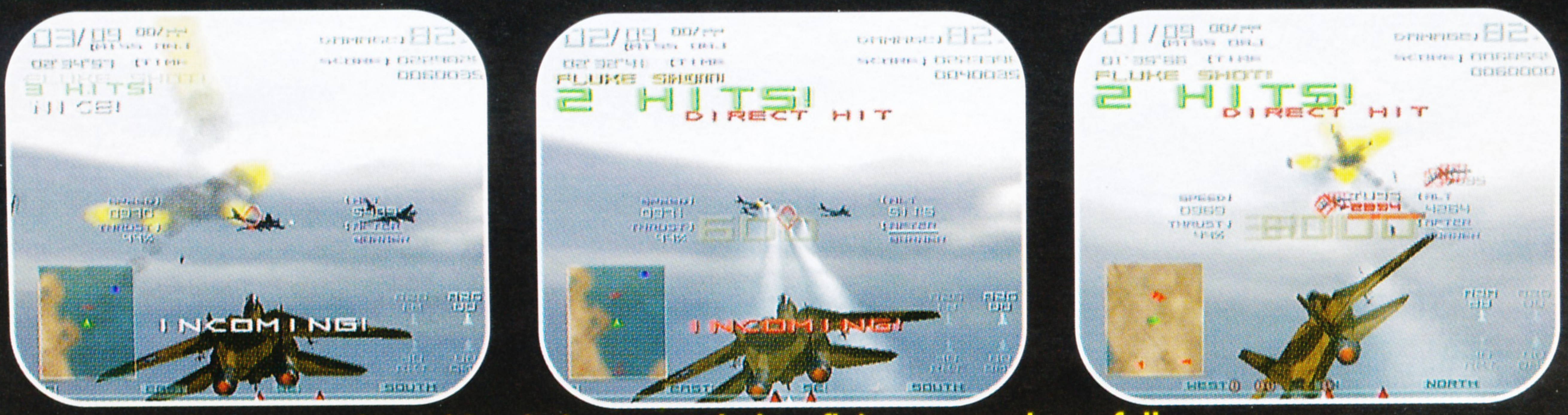
The difference between minimal altitude air-to-ground strike and high elevation air-to-air combat is astounding. Top Gun: Combat Zones has forgone trying to simulate air combat and has put its focus on very fast, low-level strikes that puts the twitch in this arcade title.

TG:CZ offers 8 separate Navy fighters. These planes are unlocked by reaching different checkpoints throughout the game or scoring enough honors to unlock them. Unfortunately, the difference in feel of each of the fighters is minimal and we would be hard pressed to tell you just which fighter we were flying if we were playing using the first person view.

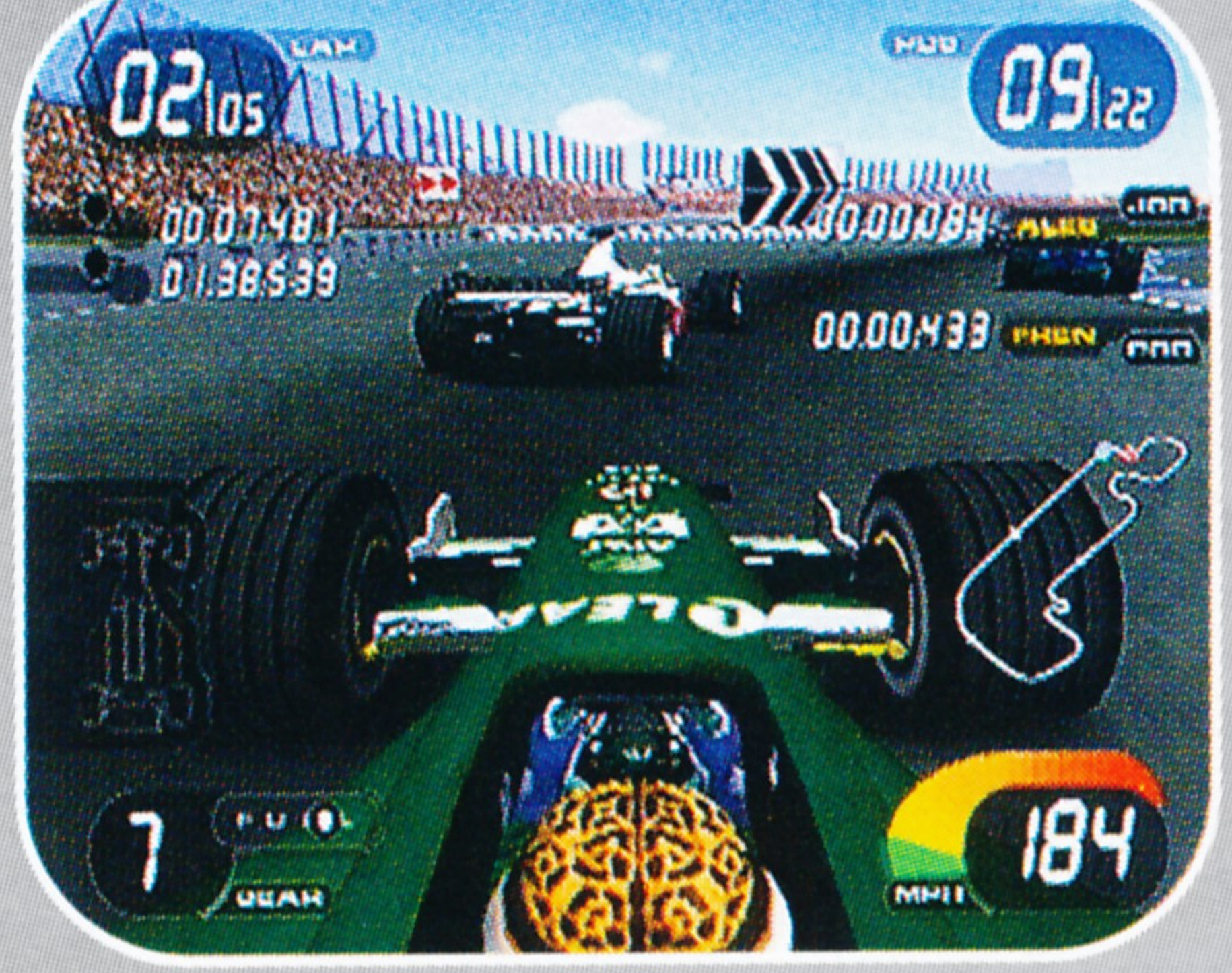
The 36 missions offer plenty of challenge and the world is well-rendered with extreme detail paid to buildings and landmarks. Sadly, blowing up these structures is a disappointment. The explosions are anemic and determining how much damage you did to a building is almost impossible. This is especially prevalent with bombs, where it is hard to tell where, how, or even if they hit their targets.

Titus does make good use of the Top Gun license, but doesn't exploit it to the extent we would have liked to see. You won't be meeting Maverick on any of your missions and don't expect any inter-plane chatter with Goose to lighten things up (granted, talking with Goose after his little accident would involve a medium and a Ouija board, but you get our point). The Top Gun feel is in the Steve Stevensesque soundtrack and awesome replay mode that creates combat scenes that look like they came directly from the Top Gun movie cutting room floor. Our only complaint is that we can't play art school movie director since the replay does not allow the player control of the camera angles.

TG:CZ does an admirable job of providing blistering speed and aerial feats that feel directly out of the movies.



•We screwed up so much on this mission we ended up flying cargo planes full of rubber dog shit out of Hong Kong



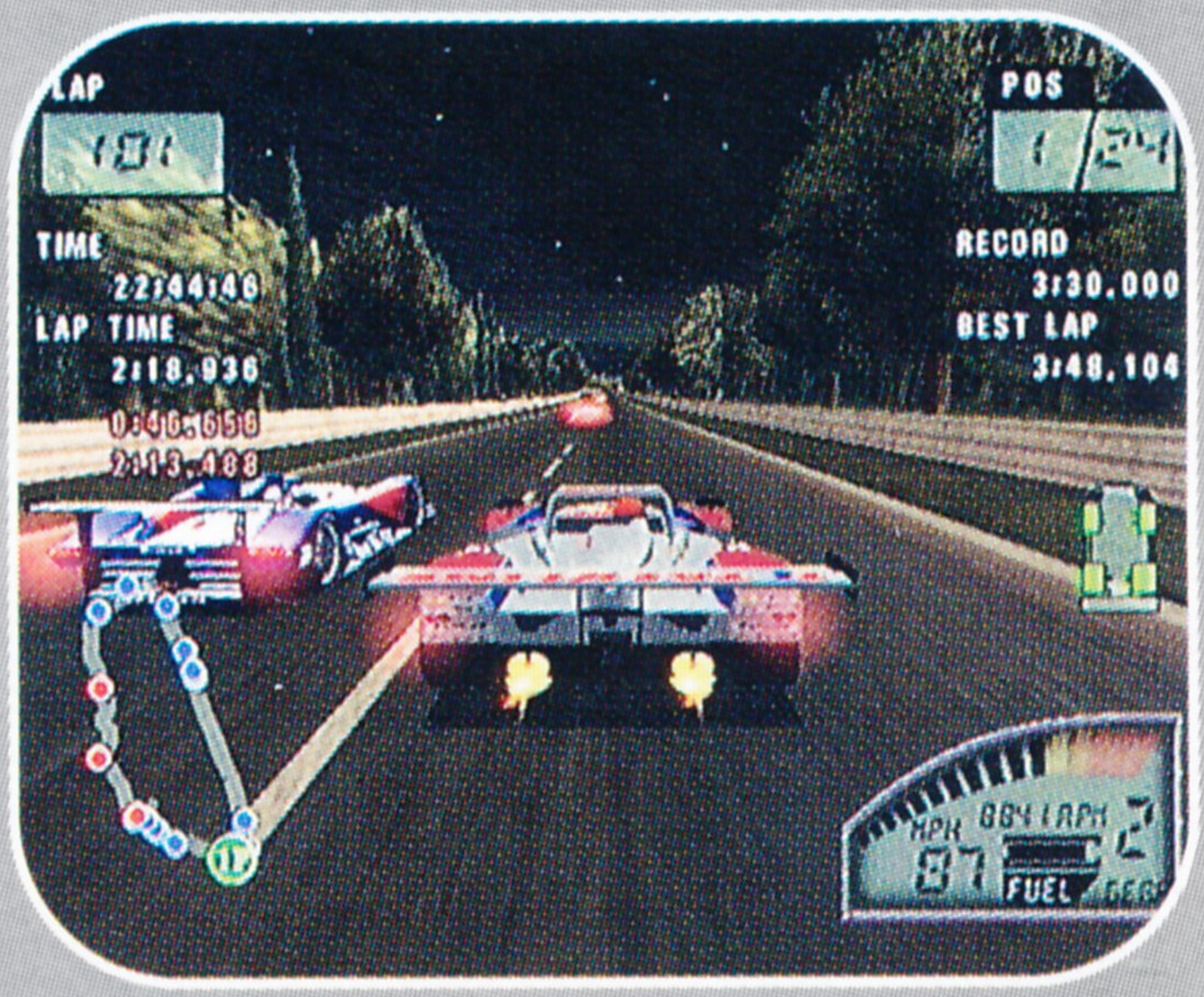
PS2
F1 2001
Sony
•SM Rating: 86

Wow, when the Europeans get a load of the U.S. version of F1 2001, there is going to be a revolt. The North American version has taken an amazingly realistic F1 simulation and tweaked it to near perfection, so much so that European racing fans should demand a release of this improved version.

The depth found in F1 2001 rivals the type football fans have drooled over in the PS2 Maddens. The season mode is set up exactly like a true F1 year, with multiple practice days and the true car and driver matchups from the 2001 season. Sector times in practice and qualifying let you know when you have shaved precious seconds off of your qualifying times and when you need to be a little more daring. The realism does ease up a bit when you bump off the road or spin out, letting you get back on the track at a reasonable speed and still compete. The on-screen course map also isn't part of a real F1 driver's view, but we certainly do appreciate it, especially in the early going.

F1 2001's major flaw is the AI drivers. They are just too damn vicious and too damn perfect. They do not hesitate to ram you from the back, side or anywhere else for that matter. And when they do, they generally race off into the sunset while you work to get your car pointed in the right direction. There is also some graphical ugliness as the resolution enhances and decreases at the beginning of the race as the PS2 tries to render all 22 cars.

Despite the high rating we are giving F1 2001, we don't recommend it for everyone. Truly thriving at this title involves memorization of the tracks, careful use of the accelerator and true understanding of F1 racing. But, if you are a Formula fan, have no doubts, this is the definitive F1 title on any system.



PS2
Le Mans 24 Hours
Infogrames
•SM Rating: 64

Test Drive Le Mans represented prototype racing well on PSX and DC. But we think Le Mans 24 Hours for PS2 could have been better.

Maybe we're picky, but we see no reason why the player's car would be the only one with a shadow. The level of detail in the racing environments isn't bad, but they don't touch the realistic look of GT3. The onscreen course maps are useless, as they don't depict details like sharp S-curves and the car icons are so large it's hard to judge distance between you and another vehicle. There are also many minor intangibles that just give the game a lower quality look.

Though control is a little loose, the game isn't unplayable as long as you stay on the track. However, you are punished too severely for driving even slightly off course. Even at low speeds, regaining control is excruciatingly difficult. The ability to toggle driver aids makes things easier, but they also eliminate the need for skill.

Where LM24H excels is its deep mode selection and wide range of courses and cars. The most enticing of the game's 12 circuits is, of course, France's Le Mans. Here you can calibrate the game to accommodate an actual 24-hour race, where the winner is the driver who completes the most laps. This spectacular event is represented down to the most intimate details. The sun slowly drops from the sky starting around 7:00, trackside lights and car lights pop on just before 8:00 (although the lighting effects are way overdone), and you may even have to deal with the occasionally changing weather pattern. The only problem is that you can only save during pit stops. Since it normally takes about two hours to wear out your tires and/or empty the gas tank, you need to devote at least that much time to each sitting.

PS2
Ace Combat 4: Shattered Skies
Namco
•SM Rating: 89

One thing that irked us about AC3 was that the American version lacked the story element from the Japanese version. While some may not care, we love Ace Combat 4's storytelling. Through the eyes of a boy whose family was killed during an invasion, you witness the human side of war. After each mission, you see how your actions affect enemy pilots.

There are several key enhancements to AC4's gameplay. The game fully utilizes the analog capabilities of the Dual Shock 2, with the amount of pressure applied to the shoulder buttons relating to the degree of acceleration or deceleration. Even your radar's zoom capability is linked to a single button. There are also a few cool camera tricks, like the ability to fire a missile and then visually follow it all the way into the target.

The visual upgrade, though expected with the newer hardware, is substantial. Fog settles into valleys, the terrain is stunningly detailed and real war effects like flak and trooper-launched flares dot the skies. Sound is equally realistic, especially the radio chatter of both allies and enemies. Replays feature incredibly realistic engine roar and other audio effects, heightening the tension. However, the replay interface itself is a letdown. Not only did we wish for more control, but they rarely captured the best moments of our sorties. When compared to Aerowings' replay system (Dreamcast), AC4's pales.

The overall war campaign follows events set just a few years in the future. An anti-asteroid weapon has been developed to protect the earth, but currently the enemy is using it for war. As Mobius 1, you'll fly alongside your Allied comrades (though you'll be doing nearly all of the work) in an attempt to take it out and turn the tides of war. It's not a perfect combat sim, but Ace Combat still reigns as the king of console air fighters.

Even among the enemy there are men like this.
I don't like flying so close to the action, even if he's on our side.
SPEED
I don't care if you hit one of our guys!
SPEED

•Never say die, Iron Eagle! (well, we couldn't very well use Top Gun quotes in an Ace Combat review, could we?)

PS2
Kessen II
Koei
•SM Rating: 80

Inserting Kessen into 3rd Century China was brilliant. Gamers who have lived Koei's Romance series simply should not miss this exquisite rendition of the era. Others looking for a great RTS title sans the hassles of micromanagement should also look into Kessen II.

As the Han Empire collapses under war and plague, players control General Liu Bei and his continually growing army. The maniacal Cao Cao, however, wishes to rule the world, and he has kidnapped the lovely Diao Chan, Liu Bei's life-love. With the world at stake, world powers collide in epic battles over love and land.

The most notable addition is the ability to use magic. During Liu Bei's travels, he recruits various magic users who can singlehandedly turn the tide of any battle. Their devastating spells light up the screen with dazzling special effects, as enemy soldiers succumb to flame, lightning, earthquakes and even tornados. Also new is the ability to select an officer and battle at field level. The only problem is that in this mode control is awful. One way to attack several enemies at once is to utilize the "Rush" ability, but usually this results in the officer barreling out of control into a group of allies. Worse, there is no auto-target, leading to many unintended attacks on friendlies.

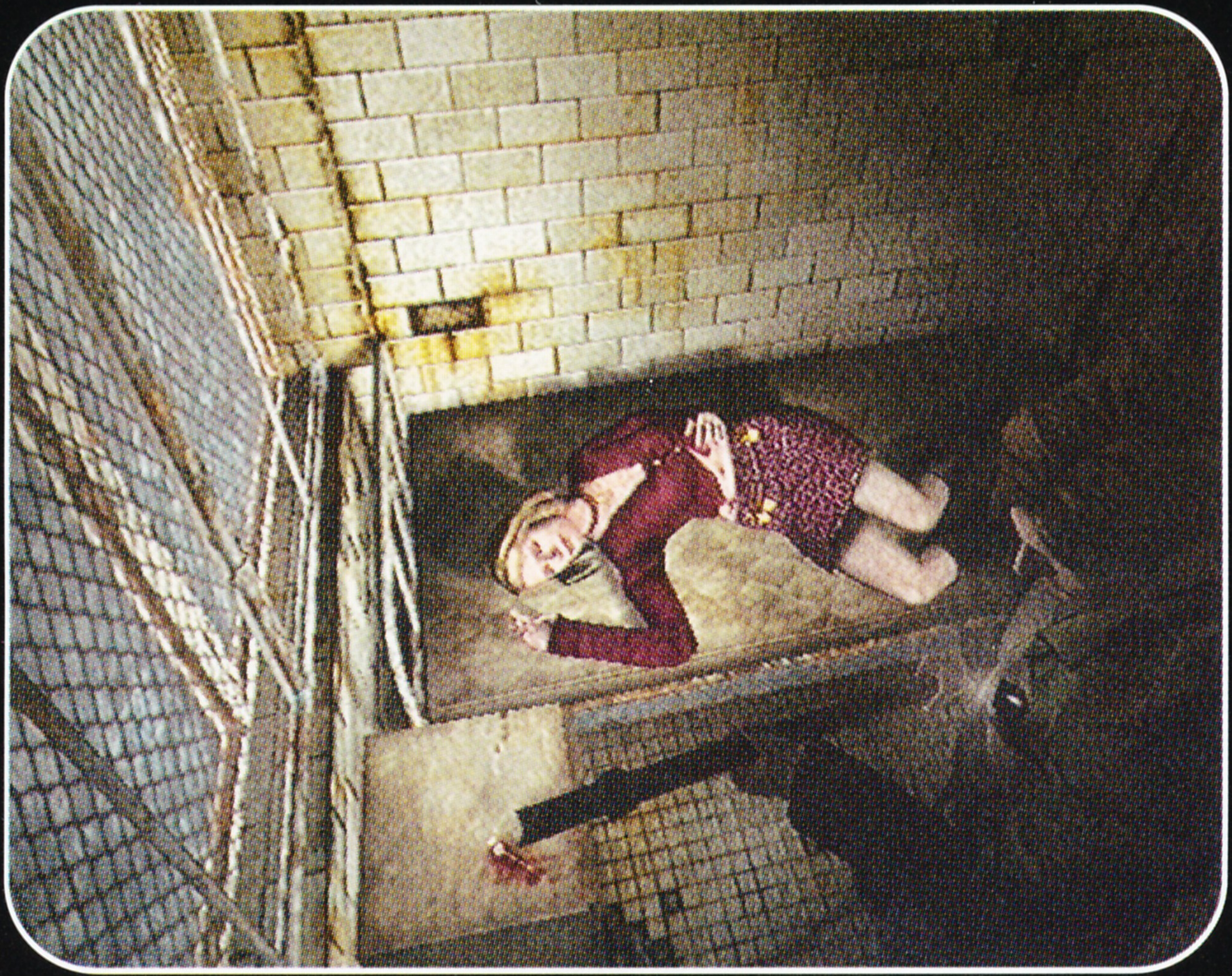
Looking at the game as a whole, however, Kessen II is highly enjoyable. Players must make crucial strategy decisions based on advice from Liu Bei's council. Objectives include forcing enemy retreats, conquering castles and driving back a navy by fighting ship to ship. Everything is presented within lush environments containing literally hundreds of characters at once, each with his or her own AI. Throw in dozens of loveable characters and some slight sexual humor, and Kessen II becomes more than a game. It's an involving war tale that plays out like a good movie.

Mei Sanniang
Ctrl
King Duosi
Map
Special
Gather/Summ
Fireball
Xu Castle
Xu Chang
Mt. Dinjun
Fan Zheng
Jiang Ling
Nanman
Liu Bei finds himself forced to split his army into thirds in order to fight the enemy on three fronts simultaneously

•What if you threw a war and Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey showed up? It would be the greatest bloodshed on earth

•Blonde, cute and totally psycho. Isn't that always the way?

I've never been so scared in my whole life!



PS2
Silent Hill 2
Konami
•SM Rating: 85

Silent Hill scared the crap out of us. Scenes like the corpse falling out of the locker (remember THAT?) stick in our minds like daggers. While Resident Evil was always about action and gore, Silent Hill focused on chilling atmosphere and a twisted plot (ok, and gore). For the second trip into this macabre world, Konami stuck with the formula and improved upon the areas that needed work.

Your character, James, has received a letter from his dead wife Mary. In the note, she beckons him to meet her in Silent Hill. When he reaches the town, he quickly discovers that there is something horribly wrong. Not only are major roads blocked or impassable, but the town has been infested by grotesque creatures. Since there is no easy way to reach the park (where he initially believes Mary is waiting), James must seek alternate routes by locating keys and solving puzzles.

SH2 follows the same general format laid out in the first game. This is probably the game's largest problem, as traversing an entire town on foot is a daunting task even without being attacked by hell-spawned beasties. Many times you'll walk seemingly forever without any major action. These lulls could turn the casual gamer off, especially after beating the game the first time. There are several endings (including a very tragic one) but it takes gut-wrenching patience to see them all.

That aside, SH2 reaches new heights in nearly every department. At the start, you can select the difficulty level for both the action and the puzzles. Action difficulty refers to enemy occurrence, the damage they inflict and the amount of ammo provided, while puzzle difficulty actually changes the amount of smarts you'll need to solve the riddles. Control is also improved with a new feature that allows James to look in any direction while moving. It's tough to grasp at first, as it requires holding L2 while manipulating both sticks. However, the camera becomes cinematic and this allows you to avoid enemies without having to stop moving. James can strafe while firing at enemies, too. He has trouble swinging bludgeoning weapons (he can hardly walk with the giant sword he gets at the end), but it's important to note that this is intentional. Remember, this is an ordinary guy thrown into a very bizarre situation. New features like the way his eyes lock onto items also enhance the gameplay.

Dialogue is well scripted and the voiceovers do a good job of conveying emotion. James meets several characters and each fits well into the script. At one point, he must protect a beautiful girl named Maria who looks strangely similar to Mary. Unlike the first SH, at the end you won't be left asking, "What just happened?" Instead, you'll feel like you understand what took place, whether it ended in peace or tragedy.

If you finished the first SH, you'll remember the "dimension warp" and how disoriented you became. A similar occurrence happens in SH2, only much farther into the game. Shortly afterwards, you begin a descent into the depths of the earth that is so disturbing you may not want to play alone. This is what makes the trip so engrossing. By that point you are completely involved, and you just have to know what happens. If you make it that far, you're likely the type of gamer that will want to experience it again and again.

•If evil takes up residence in your home, don't be alone in the dark. Our extermination experts can help. Call 1-800-ILL-BLED and ask for James

Super Big
Largemouth Bass
11 lb. 12 oz.

Dreamcast
Sega Bass Fishing 2
Sega
•SM Rating: 82

Let's be honest; a true to life, realistic fishing game would probably bore the waders off of most of the gameplayers out there and a fishing title that relies completely on twitch arcade controls will alienate the true fisherman in the audience. Happily, a delicate balance of realism and entertainment has been struck by Sega Bass Fishing 2.

The realism kicks in SBF2 in most the right places. Lures must be properly moved to attract the fish, and weather and time of day play a part in fish activity. The arcade portion does its part too, removing tedious management and giving urgency to everything, whether you are trolling for a bite or reeling in a trophy bass.

SBF2 plays just as well with the default Dreamcast controller as it does with the fishing rod controller. The rod gives a more realistic feel but marathon sessions can leave you with hand cramps.

Like many fishing games, the manual leaves you in the dark when it comes to technique, but audio clues (the swoosh of the rod) give you a nod when you are on the right track. Once you learn the rod and lure movements, winning the tournaments is a matter of finding and landing the big ones. That is where one of the drawbacks of SBF2 becomes apparent. The "Lunkers" (that's fishing lingo for the Monster Bass that really tear up the scales, aren't we cool!) appear in the same positions in each level every time. This really takes some of the fun out of the hunt. The tournaments also move too fast (1 second for every minute). While patience may be a virtue in real fishing, it's a detriment in SBF2 and you can easily waste a quarter of the day trying to snag a single bass.

Sega reeled us in hook, line and sinker with Sega Bass Fishing 2. It has a few flaws, but nothing to spit the hook out at.

wounds
will
heal. . . .

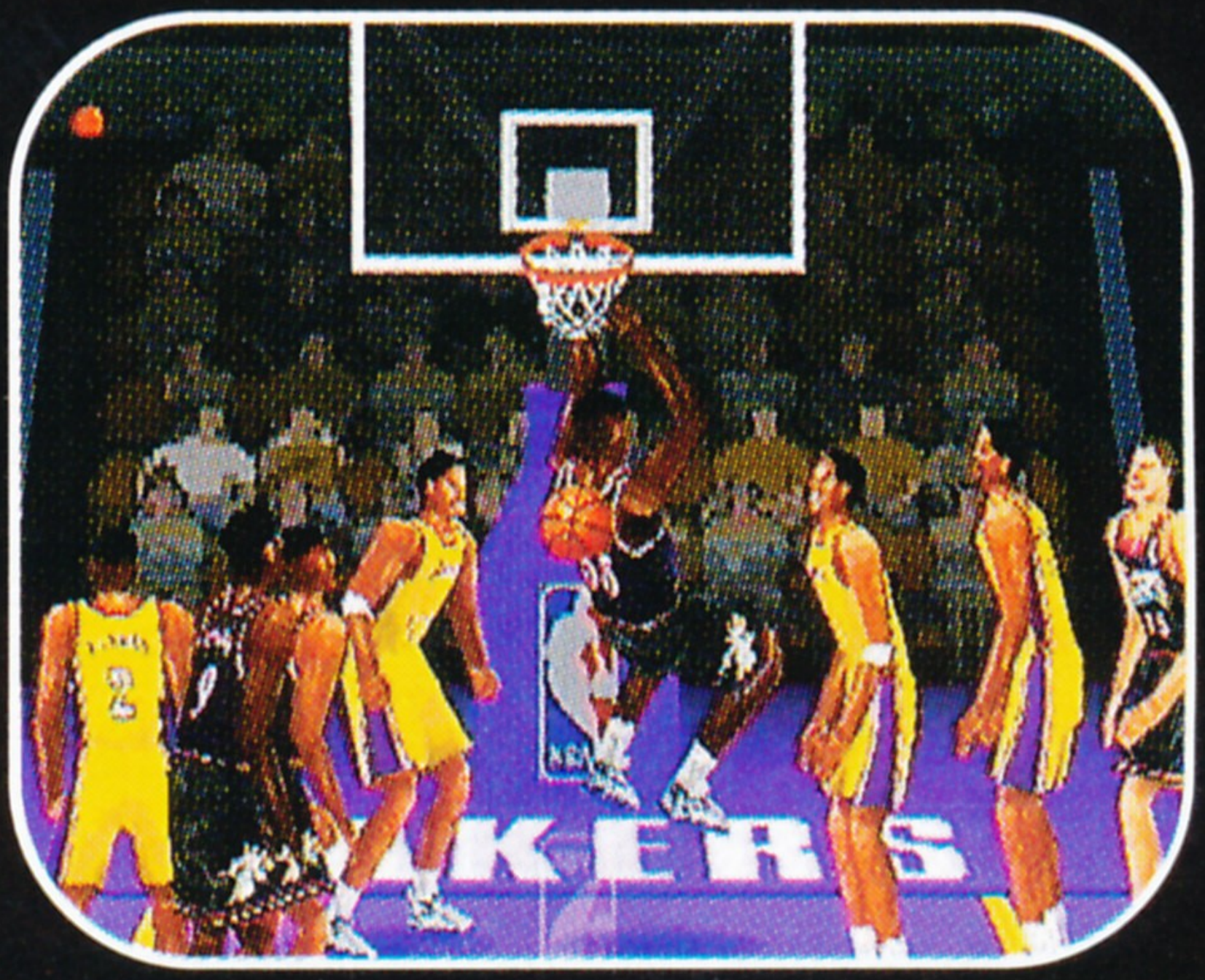
PSX
NBA ShootOut 2002
989 Sports
•SM Rating: 78

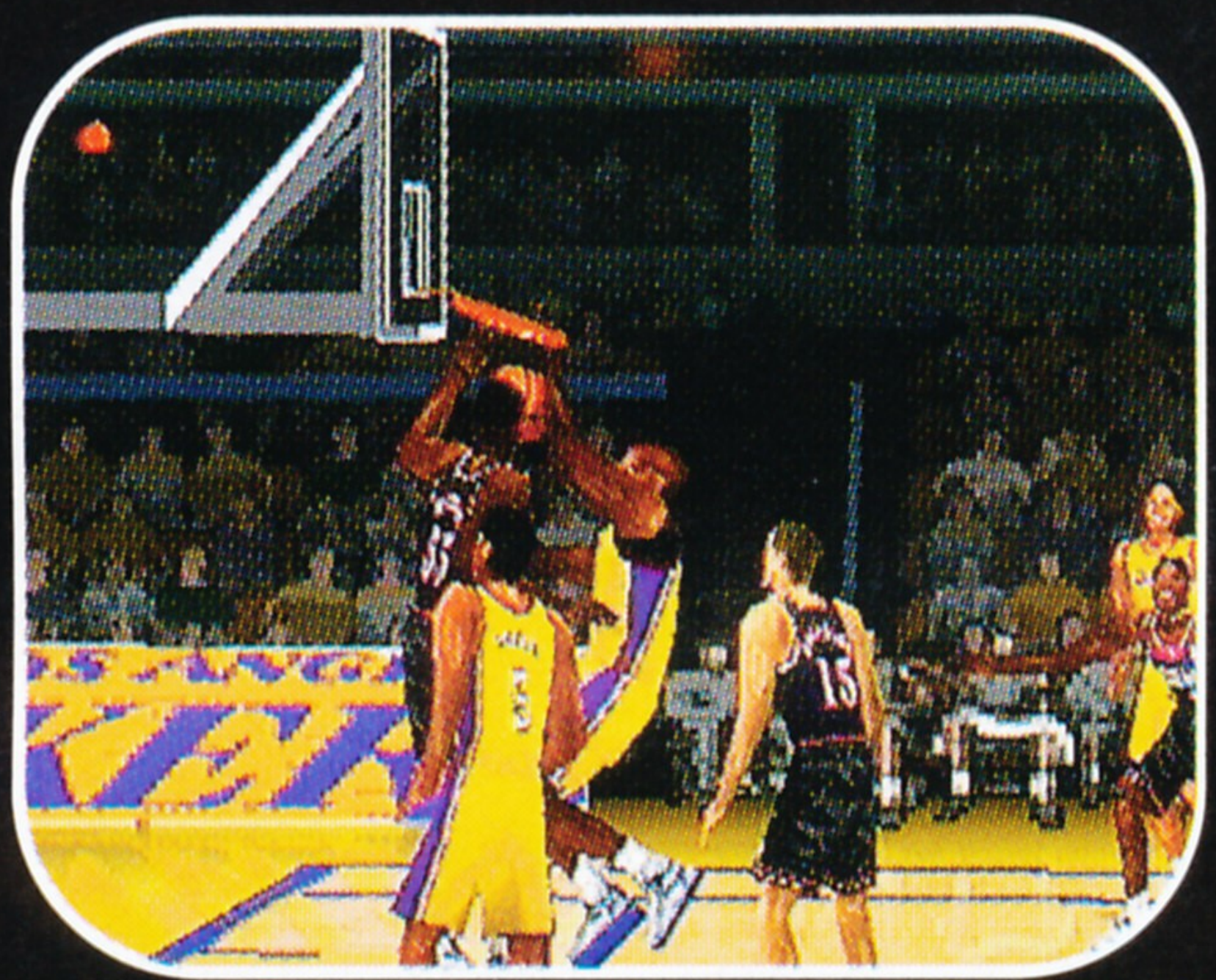
Well, it's happened. We are officially spoiled. A year ago, we would have been clamoring to get our hands on the latest PSX sports offering. However, the PS2 has done us in. When we go to review the latest in a sports franchise on the PSX, it is like taking a trip in the graphical wayback machine.

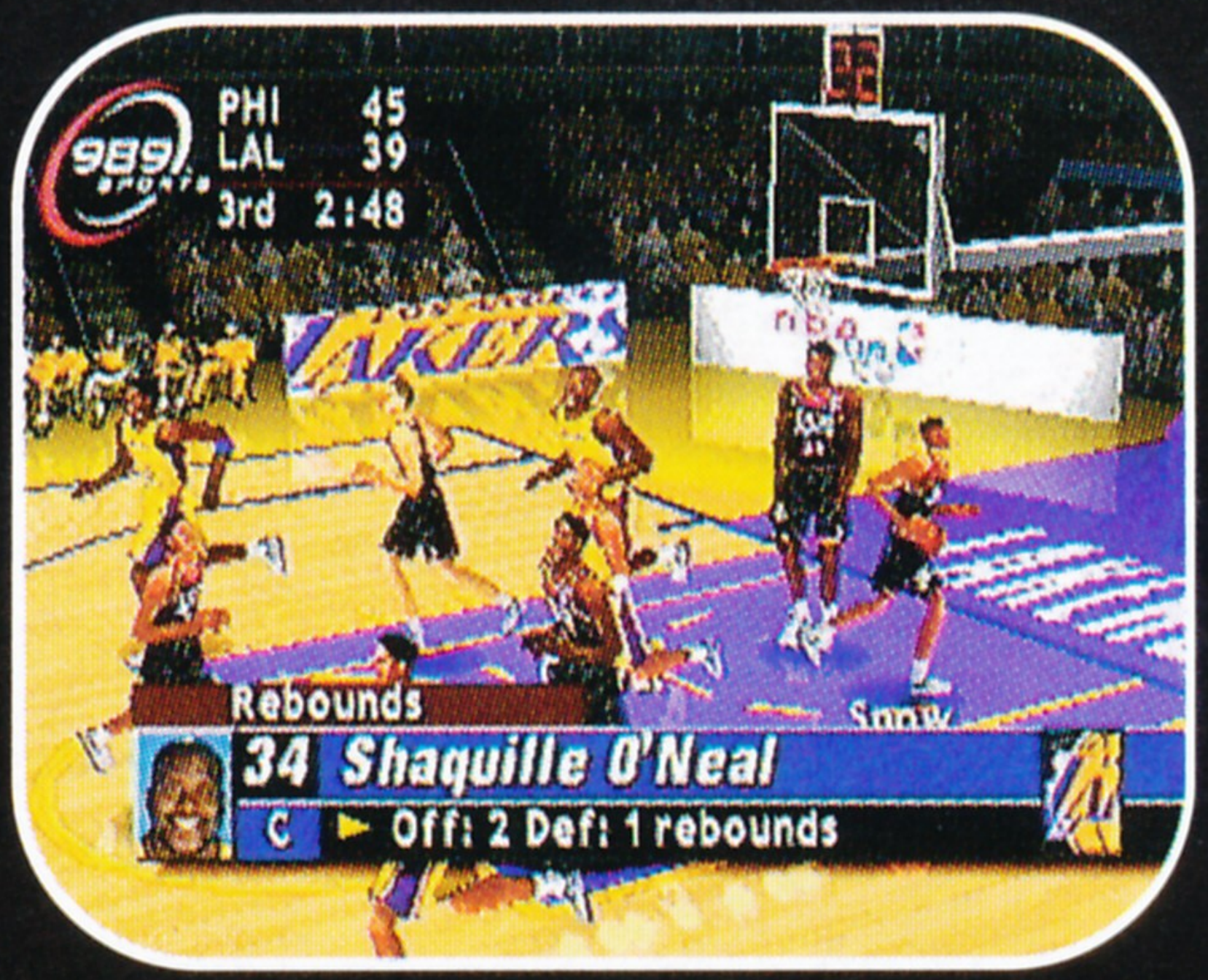
Even though we have been pampered by PS2 graphics, NBA ShootOut 2002 does look amazingly good on PSX. All players and not just the high profile ones, are recognizable. 989 has also simplified the layout in this year's incarnation with one-touch player control. You can simply press one button to call for a screen or to use auto-defend. The control depth is still present with advanced features like Icon Passing and alley-oops that require more than one button press but are still intuitive.

ShootOut includes both arcade and simulation modes that, combined with tweaking the difficulty, can either open the game up into something akin to street ball or really turn it into a strat-filled game of Xs and Os. The simulation mode on the higher difficulty features a pretty realistic recreation of today's NBA. The AI doesn't resort to simply throwing bodies into the lane to keep players from constantly going for the slam but instead works the defense intelligently. The only flaw that immediately jumps out is that the ball ends up on the floor much too often and both sides just don't leave their feet enough to get the rebounds. The play-by-play commentary is also wrong a stunning amount of times. We were breaking down the court passing between two players and heard the sweet voice of New Jersey Nets broadcaster Ian Eagle call not one but both of the players the wrong name!

If the PSX is still your console of choice, NBA ShootOut 2002 gives another year's worth of strong basketball performance.







•Without St. Louis having its own team, we have the luxury of switching team allegiances mid-game

---

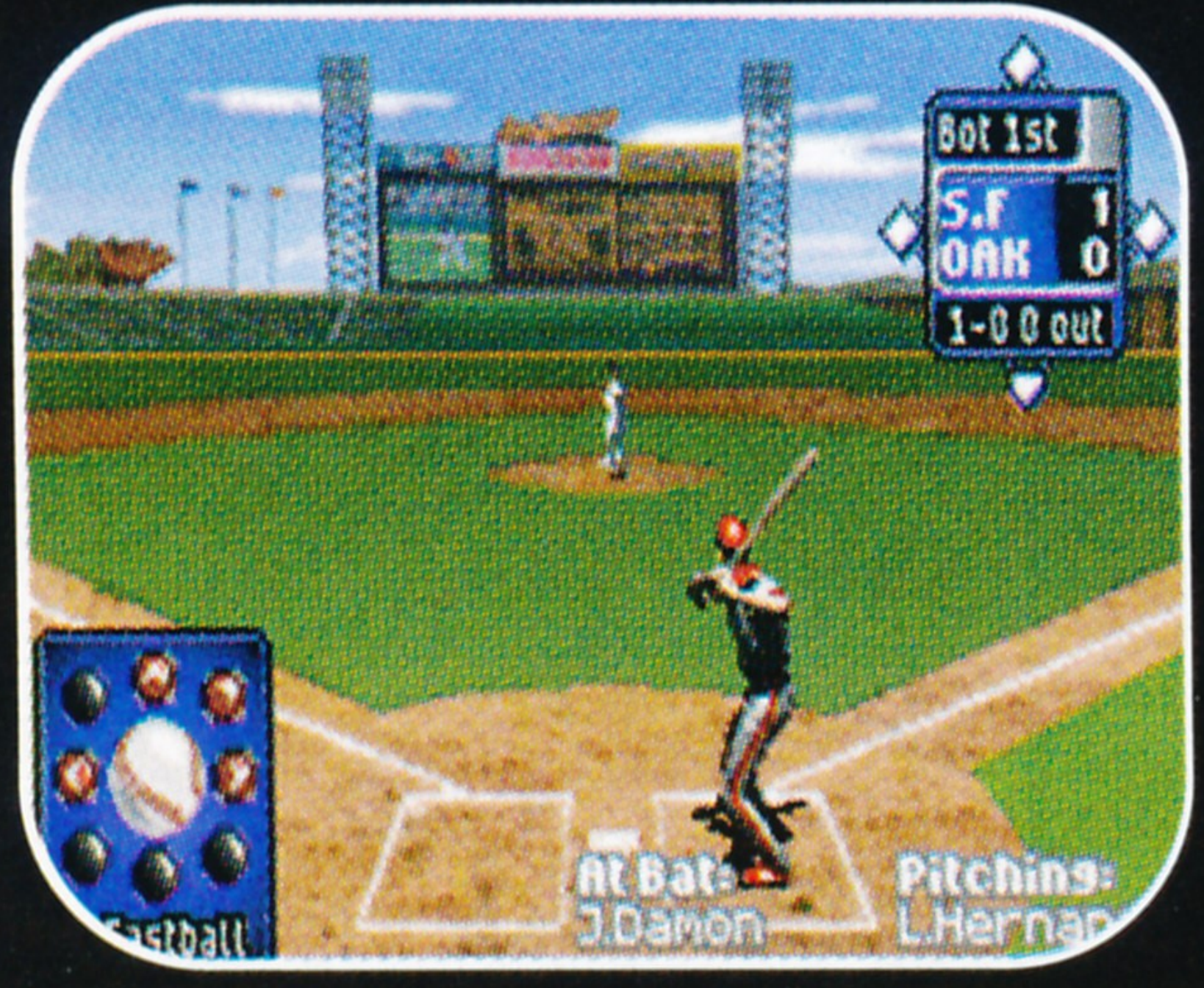
GBA
High Heat 2002
3DO
•SM Rating: 66

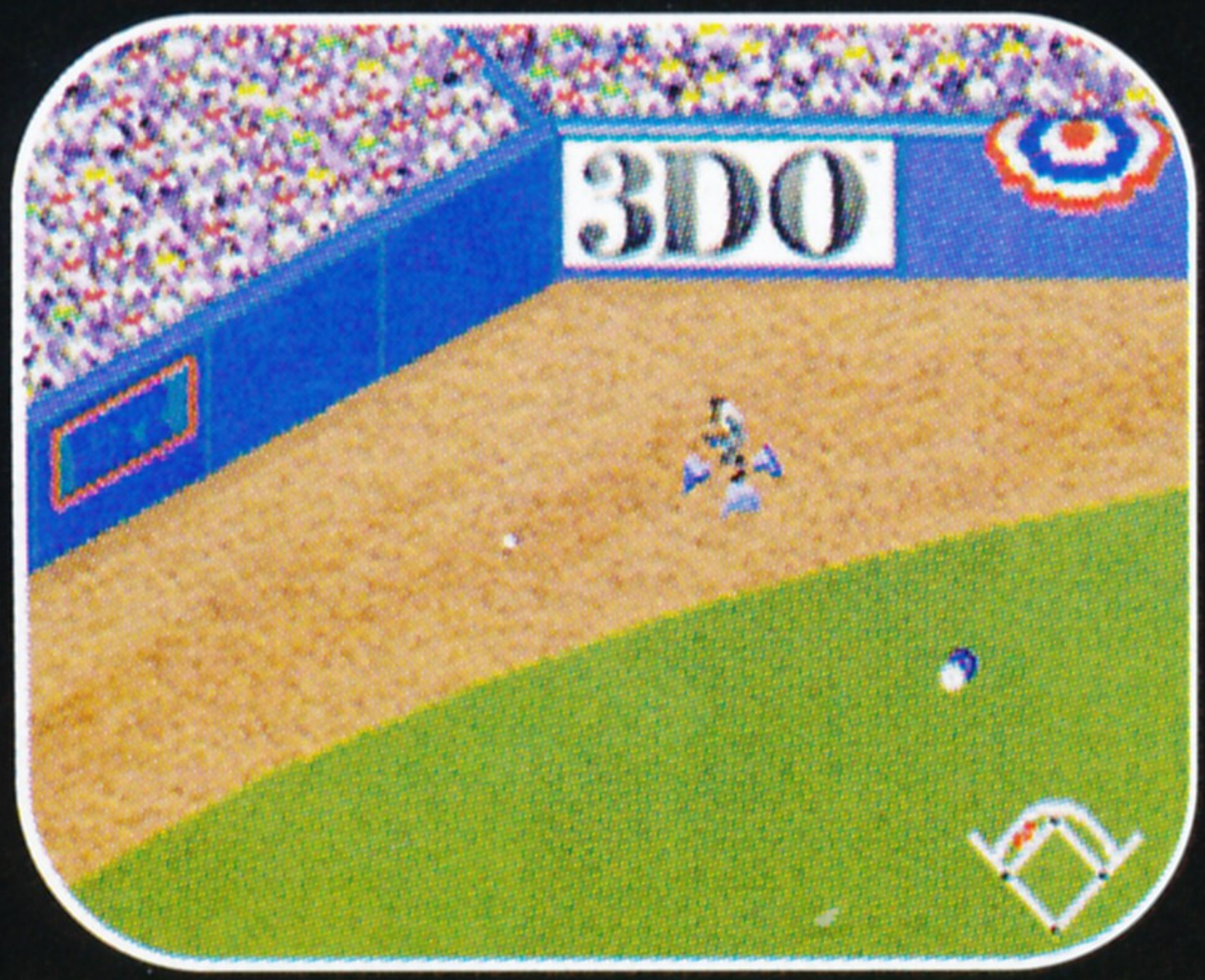
Sports have never been the strong suit of handheld machines. Not only have they been skewed for the younger audience (i.e. Extreme Sports with the Berenstain Bears), they just haven't been any good.

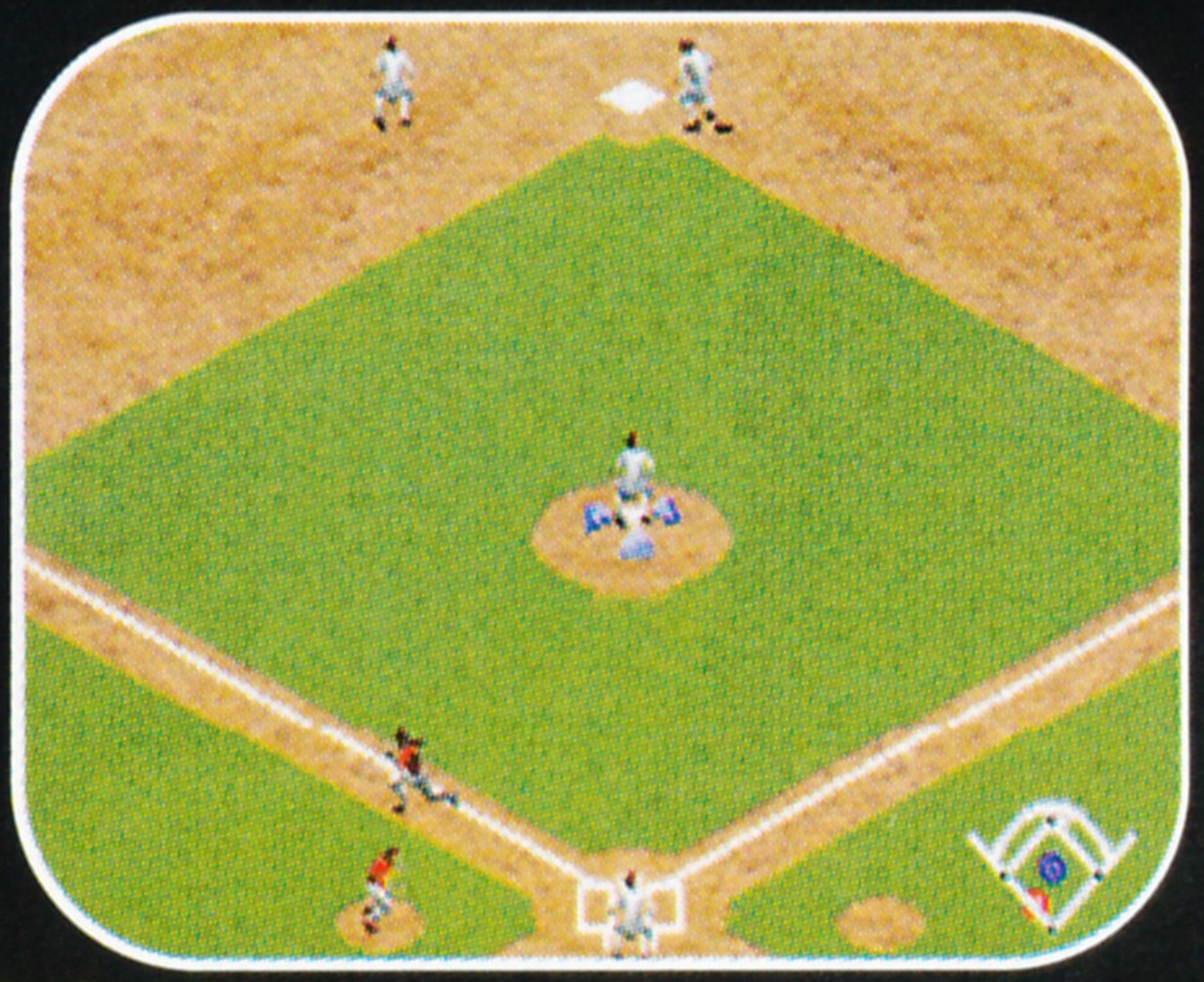
The GBA seems to be attracting the older gaming audience and High Heat 2002 is the first serious shot at making realistic baseball. Visually, High Heat for GBA is utterly stunning. It's hard to believe the are coming from a portable. The core gameplay is very realistic, and even though it only features one default difficulty setting, the challenge feels like true baseball. The scores never got truly out of hand and the AI plays most of the basics intelligently. The computer will sometimes put a pitch over the plate when it's ahead in the count but we are going to chalk that up to realism instead of an AI flaw, since it helped us win a few games. :)

High Heat allows players to play a full 162 game season or choose from a number of shortened seasons, practice to hone your skills or enter the Home Run Derby and record your longest shot. The control uses only the directional pad and A/B buttons but exploits them to their fullest. It does take a few games to get base running and throwing the ball to the proper base down. Delving deeper into HH2002 brings many of its weaknesses to light. While things like the well thought out use of the cut-off man are included, the omission of key Baseball "must-haves" like base stealing and pick-offs are more than disturbing, especially since High Heat has always prided itself on being THE most realistic baseball game on the market. Sure, plunking a batter in the back with a fastball isn't a necessary part of baseball, but it's the type of thing we have always expected of High Heat.

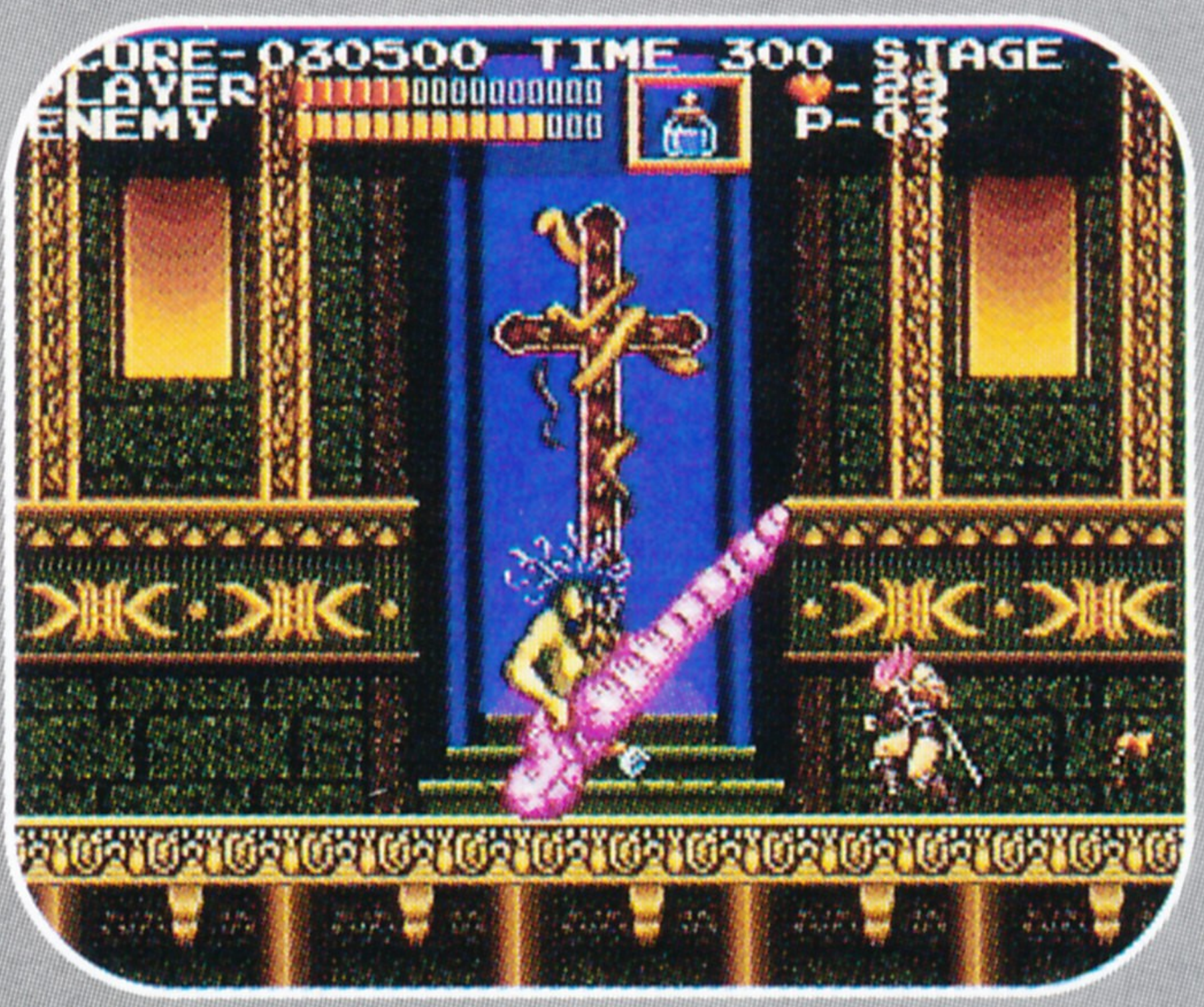
HH2002 a decent portable baseball title, it just doesn't live up to the High Heat name.







•The stadiums are accurate down to the smallest detail including the left field 3DO ad in St. Louis, Kansas City, Detroit, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York...



PSX
Castlevania Chronicles
Konami
•SM Rating: 69

In 1993, only a small percentage of Japan's homes contained a PC. Surprisingly, PC became the home of Demon Castle Dracula, a new chapter in the "Belmonts vs. Dracula" Castlevania legacy. Castlevania Chronicles revives that obscure title for PSX.

The story is simple. You are Simon Belmont, and you must raid Dracula's 2D castle and destroy him. Warning: Don't expect Symphony of the Night. There are no RPG elements to speak of, and the game's length is only a few hours. However, if you're an oldie (like us) and loved the classic platforming action of the old Casltevanias, CC is a great addition to your collection. Many of the standby enemies are present, like the Medusa heads and those damn red skeletons that never stay down long enough. Also, Simon has the ability to jump and whip downward or to his diagonals, helping you to dodge and attack fast moving enemies.

CC can be played in one of two modes. Original Mode is a direct Demon Castle Dracula port, while Arranged Mode is presented with better graphics and sound. Additionally, the Arranged version allows you to adjust gameplay options such as difficulty, time limit on or off, and number of lives.

Even seasoned Castlevania vets may become frustrated with some of Chronicles' mechanics. Expect to die often as there are many areas where you must execute precise jumps. Boss fights in later levels can also be extremely difficult, as checkpoints occur many screens before boss rooms. This means it's nearly impossible to reach bosses with full health.

At only $20, Chronicles is worth the asking price, even with its high difficulty. Just make sure you grab a copy quickly, because Konami is only planning a run of 25,000 units.

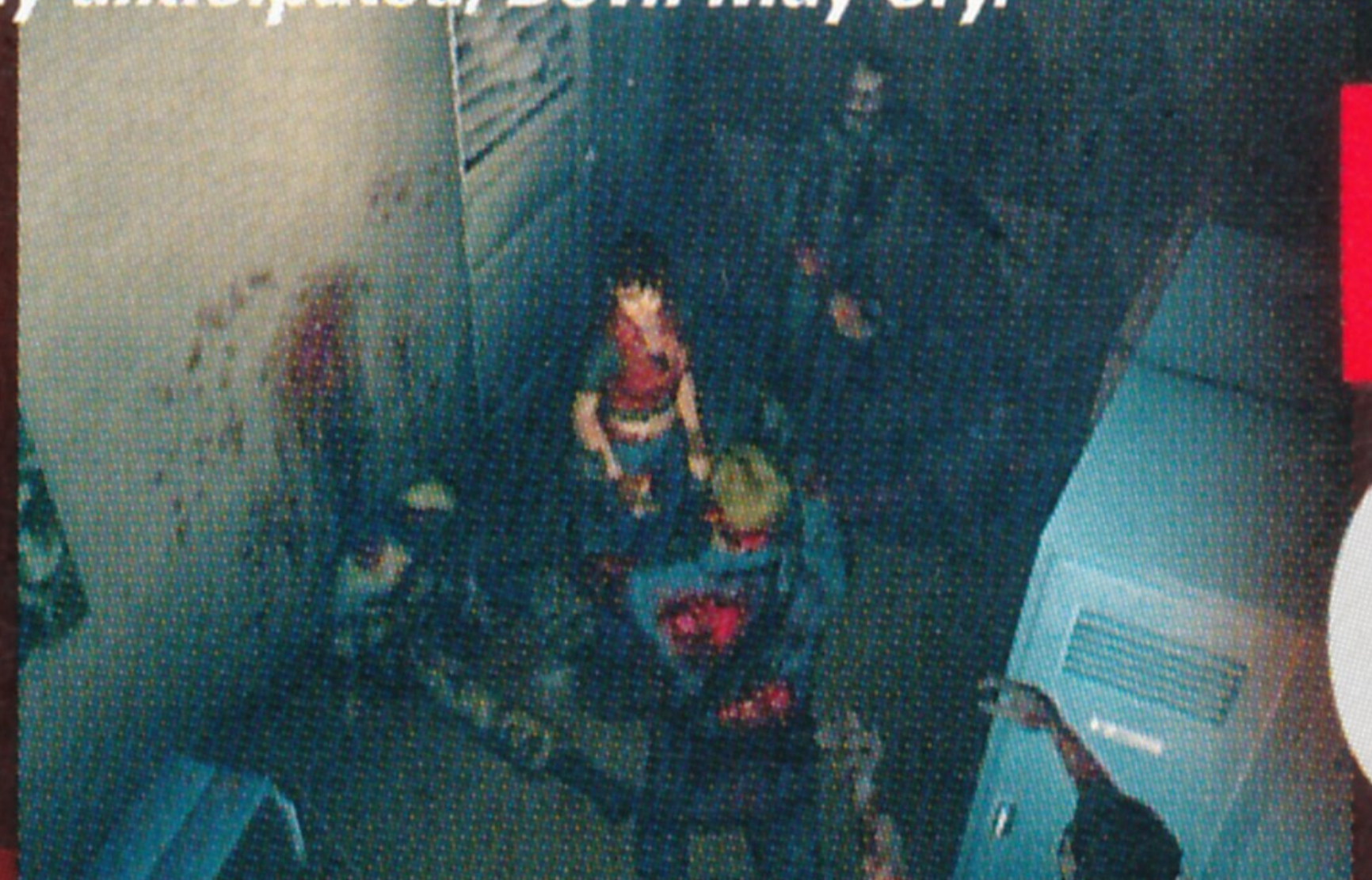
KONAMI
. . . but your
mind
will be
scarred
forever.
SILENT HILL 2
Swordmist
Werechang
Son Goku
LV 17 EXP 66
HP 288/288
MP 128/128
Nyoibo
Emperor Helmet
Emperor Armor
WAR 66
MGC 61
SPD 66
LUCK 65
OFF 94 DEF 104
Re-Equip
Equip. Info
Attack Info
Were Info
Results
Back
Cloud
MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Violence
Blood and Gore
PlayStation 2

SILENT HILL® is a registered trademark of KONAMI COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT TOKYO, Inc. © 1999 2001 KONAMI COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT TOKYO, Inc. KONAMI® is a registered trademark of KONAMI

FULL-FRONTAL
FEAR.

Celebrate the 5th anniversary of the most terrifying game series ever as it mutates onto the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system. Join Claire Redfield, as she searches for her missing brother, Chris, and dig deeper into the evil doings of Umbrella Corporation. Flesh eating zombies and bio-tech monstrosities haunt your every move. As an added bonus, this special edition includes never-before-seen cut scenes and an interactive demo of the highly anticipated, Devil May Cry.

INCLUDES
DEVIL MAY CRY
PLAYABLE DEMO



CAPCOM.com
DEALS · STORE · GEAR · CAPCOM EDGE · NEWSLETTER · NEW RELEASES · ART · PREVIEWS · GAMES

MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore
Violence

CAPCOM

RESIDENT EVIL
CODE: Veronica X

PlayStation®2

©CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2001 ©CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 2001. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. CAPCOM and the CAPCOM LOGO are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X and CAPCOM EDGE are trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD.